

CONVERSATIONS  
ON  
CAVALRY.)

BY

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE.

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THE causes which led to the writing of this book are sufficiently indicated in the author's preface.

Its modest title—"Gespräche über Reiterei"—has, I fear, concealed from many its far-reaching importance, not only to the Army, but to the public at large.

The efficiency of an army under Parliamentary control is almost entirely conditioned by the interest and intelligence which public opinion brings to bear upon it, and the means it places at the disposal of the executive branch for its training and equipment. Officers can no more make bricks without straw than other people, and if the guardians of the public purse neither know how much straw is required to make the bricks, nor can distinguish between a good brick when made and a bad one, it is, to say the least, extremely improbable that they will get the best value for their money.

Owing to this want of information on the part of the public, Great Britain never has, as yet, enjoyed the services of a really perfect cavalry; indeed, it is strictly correct to say that up to date a perfect cavalry has never been seen on any battlefield, nothing, at least, approaching the standard both Austrians and Germans have at present attained, which, high though it is, is still considerably below what I consider the attainable ideal of our own; and the reasons why it has been so are important enough to deserve recapitulation.

Mainly the histories of all cavalries until the introduction of universal liability to service in Prussia in 1808, has been one of alternate excessive augmentation in war time, and excessive reduction during peace—and the consequence has always been an absence of that uniformity amongst the individual men on horses on which primarily the power of the arm depends—hence, everywhere results less decisive than they should have been, involving greater loss than necessary, which in turn entailed the swamping of the ranks with fresh recruits and young horses, for the adequate training of which both time and opportunity have alike been lacking;—hence, finally, a false impression left on the minds of practical soldiers who had seen it in the field, of the value of the services the perfect arm may be expected to render.

The trouble is accentuated as time goes on, by the habit of military writers, particularly of text-books for examination purposes, in using the

single words "cavalry," "infantry," etc., to designate an almost infinite variety of things. Between the French cuirassiers of 1814\* and Seidlitz's picked squadrons after the peace of Hubertusberg, there are many hundreds of gradations, and equally so between the trained infantry of the British squares at Waterloo, and the untrained French levies of 1792; yet the tactician who wishes to demonstrate, let us say, the superiority of cavalry over infantry, or the reverse, uses the terms without further definition, as covering both, thereby conveying an utterly false impression to the mind of the average student; from such errors, the perusal of this work will preserve him.

In time the student, fortified, perhaps, by a little war service under conditions markedly unfavourable to the mounted services, may become a trusted adviser of the State, or the educator of the people through the medium of some great newspaper. In response to enquiries, he instructs his clients that cavalry never were of any particular value, and in these days of breech-loaders are only needed to trot about on reconnoitring duties, for which purpose hansom cab horses are good enough remounts, and perhaps cycles are cheaper and better than all. A storm is forthwith raised against the vote for the cavalry services, and, in the interests of economy, it goes to the wall.

Or again, within the service itself; a keen reformer not initiated into the inner mysteries of the Prussian service seeks to explain the exquisite precision of their drill evolutions as a consequence of the short service compulsory system, which brings all recruits in on a given day, and facilitates the formation of regular classes and a machine-like curriculum, which von S., speaking as an expert, shows us to be the very converse of the truth.

Space fails me to indicate even a tithe of the invaluable lesson for our own service which can be read between the lines by those who bring personal experience to bear on the study, but the knowledge which will be acquired even thus will remain fruitless until such time as the gradual spread of the system of decentralisation of responsibility to the squadron commanders, which is now in process of evolution, affords to all ranks in turn the opportunity of carrying out in practice the ideas von S. sets forth.

With decentralisation arises emulation, and when in every regiment some dozen young officers are working towards the same goal, practice will soon establish the applicability of each principle involved to our own needs.

What we most require now is a visible standard of perfection to which we may all strive, and by which to gauge our own deficiencies, and during the summer months this standard may be seen in action on almost any cavalry drill ground in Germany. But since very few officers avail themselves of their opportunities in this respect, I subjoin below an

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\* See Muffling's "Das Gefecht bei Vauchamps."

account of a cavalry inspection at Darmstadt, in 1890, which shows very clearly the perfection of manœuvring to which the Germans have attained, and will, I trust, help to explain much within the book itself, and at least proves the practicability of all that von S.\* advances.

"I have just ridden in from the cavalry drill ground, where the General Officer commanding the 11th Corps has been inspecting the two regiments of the Hessian Dragoon Guards quartered here, and sit down at once to record my impressions whilst they are still fresh and vivid before me. I went down to the ground this morning almost prepared to scoff, but I have returned decidedly inclined to pray, figuratively speaking. It is intensely difficult for any Englishman, proud of his race and the magnificent material for cavalry soldiers it produces, to divest his mind of the patriotic bias and to view things as they really are, after his ideas of military smartness and etiquette have been upset by seeing the individually dirty and badly turned-out types of the German soldier about the street. It is impossible to avoid drawing unfavourable conclusions between the half-grown country bumpkins in uniform one sees on sentry-go here, with the smart, well set-up hussar or lancer one is accustomed to see swaggering down the Mall, say at Meerut or Lucknow; and in each case the bias leads one unconsciously to contrast the extreme types of either, instead of taking a fair average of both.

As I rode down towards the artillery range on which the inspection was held, I reviewed in my mind all that I had previously written on the subject, and almost convinced myself that I had really formerly sinned in the anti-patriotic line, and that these troops could not be so good as they had appeared to me to be at a distance. But almost the first appearance of the regiment on parade brought me to my senses. I rode along the line two or three times to be quite certain that I was not mistaken, and I saw that every horse was drawn up dead square to the alignment, and every stirrup practically touching, *i.e.*, the two fundamental principles of accurate manœuvring strictly fulfilled. Presently the General arrived and rode down the line, and then the march-past began—in column of divisions at a walk. About this there was nothing particular to notice, except that the horses, though in singularly plump condition for Germany, looked terribly overweighted, and that the position of their heads was uniformly good. On the other hand, their saddlery and bridles left a great deal to be desired, though the men's uniforms were sufficiently well kept. There was no trot-past, and immediately after the walk-past the regiment formed up in squadron columns at close interval, and the movements began. They lasted nearly an hour and a half without a single halt to dismount, and it is hardly possible to recall the run of them, but I will attempt to do so.

First, they moved off at a trot and executed a beautiful wheel in this close order, then wheeled into half-column and moved diagonally with perfect steadiness for about 400 yards; then wheeled back again into

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\* Von S. is now generally admitted in Germany to be General von Senfft Pilsach, who commanded the 23rd Brigade of Cavalry during the War of 1870.

squadron columns, and opened to full intervals; broke again into half-column, and after another quarter of a mile of this diagonal movement, formed to the front on the leading division and galloped some 200 yards; then broke into column left in front, and, still at a gallop, moved off to the left flank. This gallop in column of divisions was quite the thing of the day. There being five squadrons of sixty-four files each, the column was but little short of a quarter of a mile long, and consisted of twenty divisions ("züge"); yet, in spite of its great length, the rear divisions swung along as smoothly as the front ones, and there was no perceptible opening out. After keeping this up in the original direction for 1,500 yards at least, the head of the column changed direction to the left, and when it had gone another 600 yards—as near as I can measure it off a very fair-sized map which I have every reason to believe to be accurate—the "wheel into line" was sounded, and the whole advanced, still at the same pace, for another 500 yards (making in all close on 3,000 yards at the gallop), and then broke into a trot and eventually halted for a moment's rest. The pace had been so good that I had myself been left behind, and cannot say how the wheel into line was actually carried out; but, judging the final advance from the flank, it seemed to have been carried out with wonderful exactness.

Fresh instructions having been issued, the regiment again broke into column of divisions and disappeared at a trot up one of the broad roads leading through the semi-permanent camp which skirts the drill ground. Presently we heard the "halt," and the equivalent sound of "troops about" sounded, and immediately after the "gallop" again. About 500 yards from the mouth of the road lay a ridge of low sand hills, which was evidently supposed to be occupied by infantry, and against these each squadron front-formed and charged as they emerged from the defile. In spite of the ground, which is a heavy sand, rather firmer than that about Lawrencepore, but not such good going as the Long Valley, the pace was tremendous, and though the charges were not delivered in quite as well closed order as they might have been, yet, considering the squadrons had already been galloping some distance before they front-formed, the performance, on the whole, was of a very high order. After the charge, the usual *mêlée* was represented, and two squadrons charged again in capital order without re-forming; then the assembly sounded, and the regiment re-formed in rendezvous formation. They were allowed only a few moments to recover themselves, and then were off again working as a regiment in the front line of a brigade. There were some more diagonal movements in half-column, and then line formed to the front at a gallop with charge, *mêlée*, and pursuit *da capo* about fifteen minutes' more drilling with a formation to the front again from columns already galloping, but with no charge, and then the work was brought to a close by a charge of the regiment in the conventional three lines against a marked enemy, led by an independent leader, who very cleverly threw two of his skeleton squadrons on to the *mêlée* when the whole of the other regiment was already engaged. At last the regiment

halted, and whilst the officers rode out to the critique, the squadrons were once again formed up for the final gallop-past. This was very well carried out. The officers having rejoined their troops, the whole, headed by the band, moved off at the gallop. The latter, when level with the saluting point nearly, wheeled off to a flank, and wheeled up again as usual, but playing their instruments and galloping at the same time, and the good old kettledrum horse galloped proudly into his place by an inverse wheel to that of the rest of the band, and pulled up as accurately in his place as any man could have done; and then the squadrons swept by with an even smoothness of motion that left nothing to be desired. The ground was so soft that the beat of the hoofs was hardly audible, and hence there was less of the "pulse of war and passion of wonder" feeling about it than usually fills the hearts of those privileged to see the gallop-past of a British regiment over the hard *maidans* of the East; but, on the other hand, though the pace was as good as it ever ought to be, viz., 15 miles an hour at least, the horses were still thoroughly in hand 200 yards beyond the saluting point, and the formation in two ranks distinctly preserved—two points which have too often in India and at home been only conspicuous by their absence at reviews which could be named. This closed the proceedings for the first regiment inspected, and the officers were again fallen out to listen to what I afterwards learnt to have been the most complimentary remarks of the inspecting officer.

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"Only one point struck me as distinctly inferior to what I have seen in India, and that may perhaps be accounted for by the fact that the inspecting officer was an infantryman, and therefore it was thought safe to go in for a bit of eyewash which could not have escaped a cavalryman's keener perception. I allude to the *mêlées*; they were, on the whole, only indifferently done, though I have seen independent squadrons of the same regiment execute them perfectly, some few years ago. But to-day the men stuck together and hardly broke up at all; and I should like to have been able to show the Germans what, for instance, the 11th Bengal Lancers can do in the same line.

The condition of the horses was simply wonderful; for the last three weeks they have been out five times a week at regimental drills, rarely of less duration than five hours from the time of leaving barracks to returning; and, working out the distances with the map and my friends, I cannot put it down below 30 miles a day, in field-day order certainly, but still at a pace which one can only believe when one has seen it. The very day before the inspection the regiment was out five and a half hours; I went to stables to see the horses after they came in, yet they were sleek and fat enough, and none of them showed signs of fatigue. To-day, after our return, I went down again; though they had not dismounted once during the drill, and had been going at full regulation pace, 8 miles an hour trot, and 15 gallop, yet they looked as well as possible. How they do it is still a mystery to me. Their allowance of oats is certainly fractionally

better than ours, allowing for the smaller size of the horses, and their hay ration considerably smaller. I cannot see that their stable management in detail is superior to ours—in fact, I think it is decidedly the reverse; and the only explanation I can offer for the fact is the marked advantage they have in being able to keep their remounts till they are rising seven years before putting them to hard work.

On my way back I had a long conversation *à propos* of this subject with one of the officers who had himself been in India in 1887, and had seen our cavalry in several stations, notably in Rawalpindi; and that was the only reason he could assign for what was as evident to him as to me.

A great part of the manœuvres of both regiments was executed on the silent system; it was an extremely still morning, with a light haze hanging, and the sound carried extremely well, as long as they were working by words of command. But when they dispensed with them, the effect of this large mass moving silently over the soft ground, with only a confused jangle of accoutrements, was weird in the extreme. And it was astonishing how every movement of the colonel, the senior major, the adjutant, and two trumpeters, riding some 150 yards in front of the line, was followed and obeyed; it was a triumph for the follow-my-leader school; and I, for one, cannot believe it possible that such movements could have been performed with our "base" system.

I have been told, and, indeed, can see for myself, that immense improvements have been made in the last seven years; perhaps the limit of the possible attainable with such material has been reached. Recollect that the outside service any man in the ranks can have is only four years, and the majority have only two years and eight months at the outside; that the men are soldiers under compulsion, and not by free will, and the majority are simply incapable of learning to ride really well "because they are not built that way"; and then think what might we not accomplish with our very decided superiority in material, both of horse and man, if only we would condescend to step out of our shells of insular prejudice, and adopt a system which is not by any means only German, but which may be said to obtain in the conduct of every civilised business throughout the world except in our army, viz., the decentralisation of authority, and the giving to every man according to his rank full power to make the most of what is in him and in the men under him.

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"The inspection of the cavalry brigade was a sight not easily forgotten; the two regiments turned out five squadrons, each from sixty to sixty-four files—two pretty imposing masses to handle. One of the most noticeable features about the drill was the absolutely simultaneous obedience to the trumpet sounds or words of command. As the last notes of the trumpets still rang in the air, every horse throughout the whole mass moved off at the prescribed pace. When one takes into consideration the fact that the brigade in columns of divisions was about 700 yards long, and that literally as quick as one's eye could sweep from one end of the formation to another, the last horse of the body was moving, it will be



evident to what perfection they have attained. Equally striking was it to see the regiments in close column of squadrons move off together, and the wheeling of the brigade, in both regiments in this formation, was simply extraordinary, each regiment maintaining its exact shape like a small rectangular block without the least appearance of straggling at the edges; the best-drilled infantry wheeling in quarter-column could not have excelled them.

One of the most startling things I have seen done was an impromptu charge against infantry. To explain it, I must say a word about the ground. It is a large irregular rectangle, about 3,000 yards by 1,500, bounded on the south and east by woods, with broad roads cut through them, and on the north by the line of the artillery semi-permanent encampment, whilst to the west it meets cultivation which may not be ridden over. The soil is a somewhat heavy sand, with a little clay mixed with it, and it is broken by a few gentle undulations hardly perceptible at a distance, but still deep enough to hide even lancers from the eye. The brigade had been trotting up the northern boundary of the camp in column of squadrons in a westerly direction, and had them wheeled half-left into half-column. When the inspecting officer, riding on the central ridge, saw a regiment of infantry just beginning to issue from the skirts of the wood on the south, and to his right rear, he instantly sounded "troops about," which brought them into half-column, or oblique echelon, exactly in the opposite direction to that in which they had previously been proceeding; then sounded the "gallop" and "line to the front" for the right regiment, whilst the left one continued its movement in half-column till it got in position to act as support to the first line, which meanwhile swept over the ridge and came down on the infantry so rapidly that hardly 200 men were able to get out of the wood and open fire on them. Two hundred rifles, even repeaters, with barely 300 yards of open to develop their fire on, against 1,000 sabres advancing at full gallop, and therefore under fire for, at the outside, thirty seconds only, could hardly hope for success, and it gave one an idea of how great the opportunities for cavalry which may still arise are, if only the latter can manœuvre and their leaders know how to take advantage of the ground properly. Altogether within the week I have seen upwards of twenty charges of the whole brigade in line, sometimes formed from squadron columns already at the gallop, and though occasionally one noticed squadrons a little bit too loose at the moment (supposed) of collision, yet, on the whole, I have seen nothing to alter my opinion as to their immense superiority in this knee-to-knee riding over the performances of our own regiments; and in conversation with the officers I find an absolute agreement amongst them that such riding is only possible with thoroughly broken horses, and where troops are manœuvred on the follow-my-leader system, *i.e.*, where the squadrons regulate their pace and intervals by watching their own leaders, and not by turning their heads towards a directing base."

In conclusion, I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Editor of the *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association*, and to Lieutenant Reichmann, of the U.S. Cavalry, who have kindly placed this translation at my disposal.

I trust my readers will see in this courteous act a fresh evidence of the kindly spirit of comradeship in arms, which has always existed, and I hope ever will continue to unite the officers of both Armies, and which is so well expressed in Admiral Tatnal's memorable saying, "Blood is thicker than water."

F. N. MAUDE, Captain,

late R.E.

9th November, 1896.

## PREFACE.

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**T**HE conversations on cavalry, which I bring to the knowledge of the cavalry officers of our army in the following pages, did actually take place as rendered by me. I held these conversations with one of our highest cavalry officers, a man of large experience in war and peace.

When he unfolded to me his ideas, I urged him to make them the common property of our cavalry, by means of the press. But his endless duties left him no time for it; I therefore undertook to write down the contents of these conversations.

That the conversations took place and were written down before the publication of the latest Cavalry Drill Regulations of 1886, is apparent from the date of each conversation. To this point I only invite the attention of those of my kind readers who may fail to notice the date of each conversation, in order that they may keep in view that whenever the latest regulations are mentioned, those of 1876 are meant. On the whole, it is a matter of indifference upon which of the two regulations the discussion is based, my only purpose being to lay down indisputable truths for cavalry action.

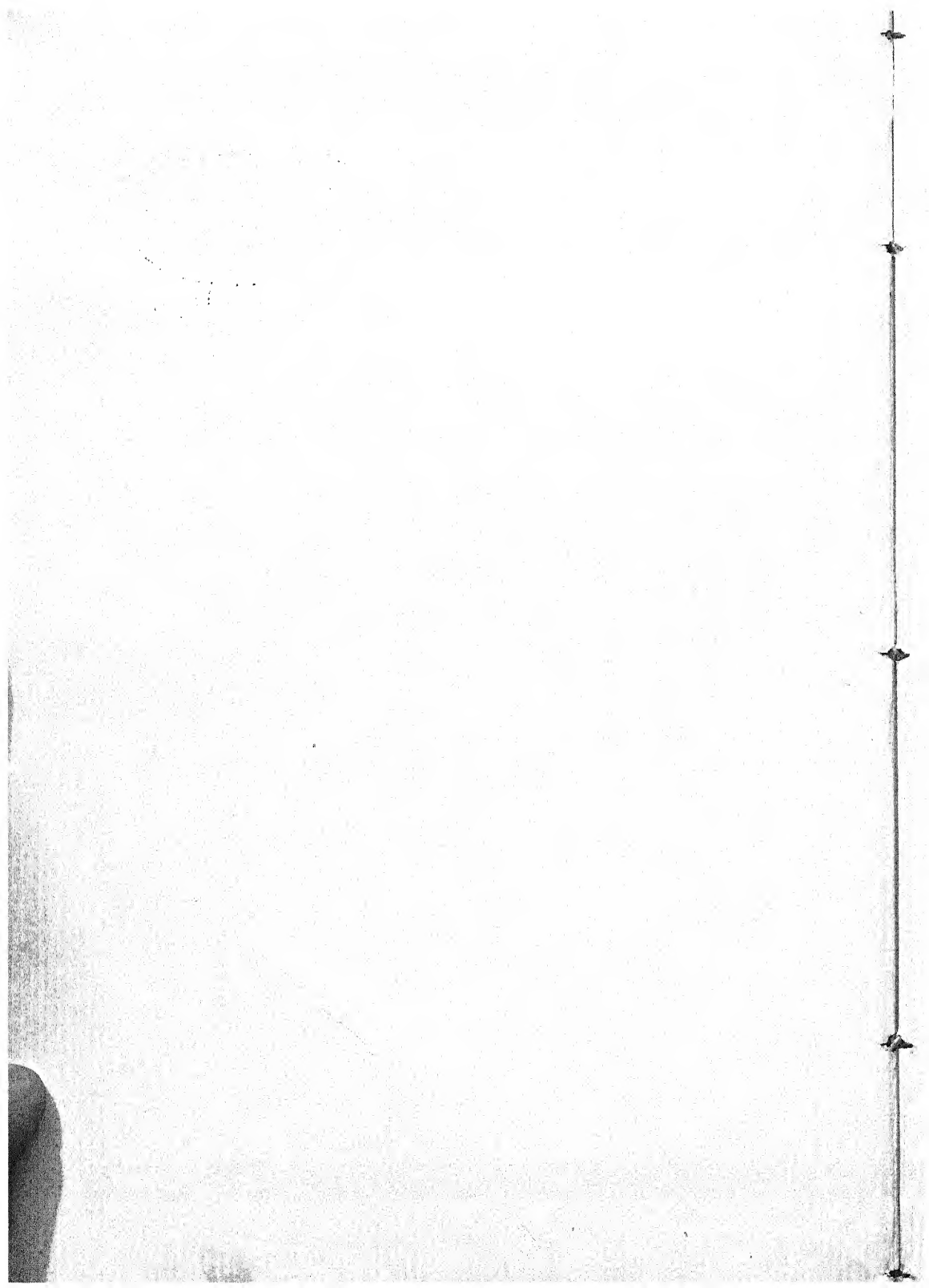
A cursory reader may, perhaps, charge me with useless repetition in many places; I ask his indulgence. But the professional man, who follows attentively the evolution of the ideas here laid down, will concede that frequent repetition of the same principles cannot be avoided, if in the different duties and training of cavalry they lead to conclusions which must be discussed separately.

Again, if the character of a friendly conversation is to be adhered to, it is more difficult to avoid repetition than in a strictly scientific work, which this book does not claim to be.

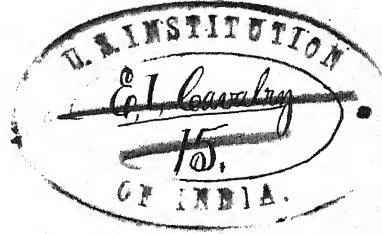
For this reason, I also ask the indulgence of those who peruse this little work superficially as "sofa literature."

THE AUTHOR.

Dresden, July, 1886.



2307,



## CONVERSATIONS ON CAVALRY.

*By Prince KRAFT ZU HOHENLOHE-INGELFINGEN.*

### FIRST CONVERSATION—GENERAL REMARKS.

S. I have read your military letters on cavalry with great interest, and must, as a cavalryman, express my thanks to you for having defended our branch of the Service against the many exaggerated charges recently made against it.

H. I did it from a sense of gratitude, for even now I vividly recall the feeling of security on the march, and when at rest, which the army enjoyed under the protection of the cavalry, scouting far in advance.

S. Having told you only that I am grateful to you for your good opinion, I hope you will not be offended if, nevertheless, my opinion differs from yours on many important and unimportant points.

H. On the contrary; it would be foolish not to admit differing opinions. It would be doubly foolish on my part not to listen attentively to the opinions of a professional man, who has served all his life in a branch of the Service which I can judge only from the standpoint of the amateur—the disinterested spectator. I shall listen to your objections all the more willingly, as they come from the branch of the Service for which I took sides. For this reason a discussion between us two can never assume the character of an impassioned controversy, which so frequently impairs good comradeship and prevents mutual elucidation and useful information. Go on, therefore; I listen.

S. In the first place, I am of the opinion that you have bestowed far too much praise on us.

H. But my praise, my admiration for the achievements of the cavalry, are the expression of what I saw and felt. Even during the war I often stood up for the cavalry, when in the course of the conversation it was asserted that infantry and artillery alone had done great deeds.

S. Believe me, I am not alone in my opinion that you have bestowed too much praise on us. It is shared by every man of our Service who has formed his own opinion from the experiences and the study of the war. You have set forth our achievements as though we



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S. Believe me, I am not alone in my opinion that you have bestowed too much praise on us. It is shared by every man of our Service who has formed his own opinion from the experiences and the study of the war. You have set forth our achievements as though we

had been the ideal cavalry, while every one of us feels how far we fell short of that, and how much room still remains for improvement.

H. If that is the case, the superabundance of my praise has had a good effect only, for nothing but striving for perfection will revive the feeling of not having done enough. If this feeling is caused, not by adverse criticism but by praise, the effect must be all the greater. Without knowing it, it seems, I effected much good.

S. That is all very nice, but unfortunately such praise is apt to confirm many in the opinion that everything is best as it stands now, and does not need improvement. We must recognise, confess, express, how and where mistakes were made. The first condition for improvement is, that imperfections be recognised.

H. It goes without saying, that wherever men undertake anything, human weakness becomes perceptible, and therefore even what is most perfect falls short of the ideal. In reading my work you probably perceived that I am well aware of mistakes made by individuals. But I did not feel called upon to uncover the mistakes of individuals, to expose them before the public.

S. Nor do I think of such a thing ; that is the business of the superior officers, and, in the last instance, of the supreme War Lord. But the red thread that goes through your work is the assertion that the principles on which our cavalry was used in the War of 1870-71 were right, that as a rule it was well led, that its action was correct, and that, on the average, its performance was very satisfactory. You go so far as to call the use of the cavalry at Vionville-Mars-la-Tour a normal one.

H. It is the opinion that I have actually formed. Nor did I mean thereby to convey praise beyond what was actually earned, in order, perhaps, to urge some on towards the ideal. Those individuals only, who fell short of what was the average achievement of the whole cavalry may feel themselves urged on. I believe I was right to say so. Was not the Uhlán the terror of all France ?

S. The Uhlán could easily become a terror to all France, since the French cavalry was even less judiciously used than ours. I simply deny that our cavalry was properly used, well led, that its action was correct, that its achievements were satisfactory ; I deny that the use of the cavalry at Vionville was a normal one.

H. It often happens that those who criticise themselves do so too harshly. To know oneself is a fine thing ; but he who judges himself too harshly, runs the risk of despairing of himself, instead of sharpening his appetite for work. Is not the principle on which in the War of 1870 our cavalry was used by the supreme command of the army a correct one ? Were not the masses of the cavalry pushed far in advance for reconnaissance ? In case of battle, was not the cavalry held ready in reserve ? Are there not numerous examples of ample pursuit ?

S. In so far as concerns the demands made on our cavalry from army headquarters, I have no fault to find. But how far did it often fall short of these demands ?



H. Simply because nothing done by man is perfect. You also said you did not wish to expose the mistakes of individuals.

S. Nor do I mean to ; I say it was the fault of the principle, not of the individual. A genius like Seidlitz would probably have accomplished more with that cavalry. But you cannot demand that every cavalry leader be a genius like Seidlitz. Such geniuses are not often born. The system of the training of the cavalry must be such as to produce leaders who know how to direct properly the masses, who undertake great risks with them ; yet these leaders need not be gifted by nature above mediocrity, so long as they are vigorous, active, brave, and chivalrous, like all our officers. But our system of training the cavalry is not apt to produce such leaders.

H. I am surprised ; then you call our cavalry poor ?

S. Not at all ; our cavalry is imbued with the very best spirit. Our officers yield to those of Frederick the Great neither in zeal, bravery, nor self-sacrifice ; our horseflesh is even better bred and effective than that of the last century.

H. Well, what more do you want ?

S. Spirit and horseflesh alone are not sufficient to make good cavalry. If the horseflesh is not trained and kept up in a rational manner, it will fail to keep up with the spirit in its flight.

H. I should think that our horseflesh proved very effective in 1870, and kept up with the flight of the spirit.

S. You have, it is true, mentioned in your letters several instances of important services rendered by the cavalry. I can add to the number of these examples from my own knowledge. I might name you a brigade, which marched from Beauvais to Gisors to participate in the capture of that place, and returned to Beauvais (60 kilometres) the same afternoon, marched next day from Beauvais to Gournay and returned (50 kilometres), rode on the fourth day from Beauvais to Breteuil, where several charges were made by individual squadrons, and returned to Beauvais the same afternoon (60 kilometres), 9th, 10th, and 12th of October, 1870. Our horseflesh is, therefore, very effective and enduring, if appropriately and rationally handled. But were we always ready to make such demands on our cavalry ? How many times after a victory did we lose touch with the enemy ? How was it possible for Vinoy to escape to Paris ? Why did not our masses of cavalry, which were in readiness, swarm around him and destroy the railroad in his rear ? Did our cavalry reconnoitre sufficiently during the winter ? How could the enemy's armies, coming to the relief of Paris, have appeared in some places as though sprung from the ground, and without our knowing anything about them until they were close upon us, if our cavalry leaders had dared to make from 50 to 100 kilometres per day with sufficiently large bodies ?

H. During winter, ice impeded the rapid movement of cavalry.

S. Ice ! Why did it not learn to ride over ice ? That is just it. Not even Seidlitz could have accomplished anything on ice with cavalry which had not been taught how to ride over ice. Some individual brigades had been taught how to ride over ice, did reconnaissance duty on ice ;

the others could also have done it if their leaders had convinced themselves of its feasibility by practice in peace. This, however, is a point which I do not desire to discuss to-day, but to which I shall perhaps refer later on.

H. But you will concede that whenever the cavalry charged, its action was unsurpassed.

S. So far as it was within its power, yes; it was brave, we must admit; what bravery and zeal could accomplish, it did; but that is not everything. What were the isolated, loose attacks to effect, which in the battle of Vionville you call normal? What would have been the result of closed attacks?

H. Well, let me remind you that formerly we were taught that in nine attacks out of ten of cavalry against cavalry, one party would wheel about before the contact; this rule was based upon the experience of former wars. In the War of 1870 such a wheeling about hardly ever occurred; nor did it in 1866. The cavalry of both sides invariably rode into each other and decided the fight by individual combat. The cavalry of 1870 could, therefore, not have been inferior to former cavalries in vigour of action.

S. Here you touch the very point. This riding into one another discloses the weakness of the cavalries of to-day. I must concede that the vigour of action, bravery and eagerness for the fray of the present cavalry leave nothing to be desired; but the reason why former cavalry did not ride so much into one another was that they rode so well closed that they could only ride against, not into, one another. Frederick the Great specifically criticised loose charges, because they were followed by a *mêlée*, and added: "I do not want a *mêlée*; the cavalry must charge '*en muraille*.'" Thus it became imperative for the party, which knew it would be overthrown, to avoid contact. Our present cavalry is not always able to ride so well closed, because frequently the horses are not well enough trained.

H. But you will concede that at Vionville the cavalry was used several times in quite respectable numbers?

S. Masses were used, not, however, in masses, but in driblets. A regiment became engaged and then everything in the vicinity was sent in, by regiment, even by squadron, and thus the atoms were flung into the fight without following a premeditated plan and without unity of command. Who, I say, commanded the entire German cavalry on the left flank? The official account does not name a common leader.

H. That was, I think, principally due to the considerable numerical superiority of the French army, which compelled the German infantry to fight in a single thin line, to which the cavalry, distributed in rear, formed the second line. When it became necessary to oppose cavalry to the French cavalry on our left, our cavalry brigades and divisions were already scattered and the units of command broken up. Is it not in the first place the duty of the Commander-in-Chief to direct the cavalry masses to a place on the battle-field from which they are all able to co-operate, taking into consideration the character of the ground? If he

does not direct them so, or is prevented by circumstances from doing so, the result will probably be that the cavalry is flung into the fight by dribblets or arrives by regiments, brigades, or troops.

S. It is true, in order to ensure the fullest use of this branch of the Service as well as the others, the first requisite is that the cavalry be assigned to a proper place for its action. But even where this was the case, our masses of cavalry did not always achieve what might have been achieved. The principal reason was that we had too few leaders competent to lead large masses of cavalry in the charge against the enemy in proper shape and with full force.

H. I thought you did not mean to criticise individuals?

S. Nor am I criticising them—neither the individual leader nor the leaders in general.

H. But you just said—

S. That we had too few leaders competent to lead a large force of cavalry in the charge against the enemy in proper shape and with full force. It is not the fault of the leaders, it is the fault of our system of cavalry training; it failed to produce the leaders.

H. I do not understand you.

S. Do you believe that a Seidlitz, Ziethen, Driesen, Gessler, etc., were born as cavalry generals and cavalry geniuses? They are the exponents of their time, *i.e.*, of the system of training which the Great King inaugurated for his cavalry.

H. So far as Seidlitz is concerned, he distinguished himself as cornet in the First Silesian War; in the Second Silesian War, Winterfeld, in a report to the King, calls him the coming man.

S. And Driesen? Did not the Great King, upon Driesen's great achievement at Leuthen, exclaim in surprise: "What! Driesen, that fool?" and you must allow me the King knew his men. You see here both a genius and the opposite of a genius gaining great successes with large masses of cavalry. Better proof cannot be produced, that their successes are the result of their time, *i.e.*, of the principles on which their training was based.

H. But we hear and read nothing but that our cavalry are following the rules laid down by the Great King for his cavalry.

S. Theoretically, yes; practically, not quite; in general tactical rules, yes; in their practical application, not always; in the demands, yes; in the execution, no; in the plan how to employ masses, yes; in the method of preparing them for such use, no; least of all in the method of training the atom to take its place in the mass, and to move with the mass; I mean the individual training of the cavalry soldier.

H. But surely, cavalry, although its individual training may be incomplete, can be used to advantage in masses, provided it is led according to the principles of Frederick the Great.

S. Allow me to dispute that point.

H. Take Murat for instance; the individual training of his cavalry was below mediocrity, yet it achieved many a great success.

S. Murat did not lead his cavalry at all according to the principles of Frederick the Great ; he formed deep massive columns and put them in motion toward the point of attack. Not one of the horsemen of these masses would have been able to give his horse another direction, had he meant to do so. Besides, Murat attacked at a trot to preserve the close formation ; that was not in accordance with the principles of the Great King either.

H. I admit the fact that the men had no control over their horses. My own uncle, who brought up a brigade against Murat's great attack at Liebertwolkwitz, told me that his horse ran away with him (he had just mounted a troop horse, his own having been killed). It galloped with him toward Murat's masses and passed them within ten paces. The hostile horsemen cursed him and struck at him, but not a single one had sufficient control over his horse to approach him, and all rushed on in the direction once taken, in one wild, deep mass, without order and without stop. Hence it would seem that, although Murat started the cavalry at a trot, it became voluntarily or involuntarily a runaway at full speed. Nor did they remain closed up, at least they did not preserve order, for my uncle describes them as a wild, runaway mob.

S. And what did the charge with the runaway horses you just mentioned accomplish? They rode through some Russian batteries, when they were charged by several regiments of the allies, which, although greatly inferior in numbers, drove them back as fast as they had come.

H. But at Hagelsberg, Marwitz's newly-formed cavalry, with its untrained, runaway horses, also achieved success.

S. A large part at least of Marwitz's horsemen were efficient, veteran cavalymen of a good school. But I have little use for cavalry, which bolts in the first charge and is not available afterwards. Colonel von Bismark did not dare to let them charge again, and said : " It is easy enough to let them loose ; but whether I shall again see a single one of them is another question. I cannot take the responsibility." (Marwitz.)

H. That is not to be expected from our present cavalry.

S. It is! In one of my engagements during the last war I ordered a troop to charge a troop of the enemy. Both sides rode into each other, as you call it, approvingly, then the whole mass moved forward (as seen by me), and beyond control, all bolted, friends as well as enemy. Hostile masses approached. Our horsemen could not be restrained. The trumpet signal " Rally " had no effect. They only stopped bolting when they received hard knocks from the enemy's supports. I am almost inclined to believe that, with cavalry which bolts thus, the direction in which it bolts is pure accident, and also whether it will be victorious or defeated.

H. Is not your criticism too severe ?

S. Perhaps upon the whole I have expressed myself too strongly ; I will, however, quote the following instance : A cavalry division of six regiments, defeated, was to be relieved by another division of the same strength. Owing to a misunderstanding the former ran into the latter

*en débâdade*, carried it along at full speed, and both divisions bolted *pêle-mêle* in wild haste.

H. I must say that I do not recall an instance in war history in which twelve regiments of cavalry ran away together.

S. Probably not, for to know it you would have had to read peace history, still unwritten. This case happened in the manœuvres of an army friendly to us. Neither division was opposed to an enemy, not even a skeleton one.

H. How fortunate for them that it did not occur in war! Both divisions would have been charged with cowardice, and disgraced.

S. And yet they would have been innocent. To a cavalry which is apt to bolt, such a thing may happen, no matter how brave it may be otherwise. Am I right now in saying that the direction in which it bolts is accidental?

H. It would almost seem so. But is it possible to train cavalry so that it will never bolt, even involuntarily?

S. Certainly it is. What was possible in the time of Frederick the Great must be possible now also. In Frederick's cavalry such bolting was unheard of.

H. You think so? How was it with Ziethen's entire cavalry in the battle of Prague?

S. That is a special case. The horses of that cavalry did not bolt against the will of the riders; during the pursuit they struck the enemy's baggage train and began to plunder. Did not Ziethen report it to the King, that his entire cavalry was drunk? A rider whose horse bolts can neither plunder nor drink.

H. I still fail to understand what you said just now, that it was due to our system of training that we had few leaders competent to lead closed divisions against the enemy.

S. Nor can you understand it by yourself, because you have not gone through this method of training yourself. But you will easily understand it when I explain the reasons.

H. I am curious to know them.

S. Our instruction in riding during the entire winter takes place on the level ground of the riding school or drill ground. This winter lasts from the 1st of October to the 1st of April or May—six or seven months. It is followed by squadron and regimental drills, also on level ground. It is only during the short time of detachment exercises and manœuvres, not quite four full weeks per year, that our cavalry has an opportunity to ride across country. Will the horse thus be sufficiently practised to pay attention itself to the ground? Can the rider gain the confidence in his horse, that it will carry him over any kind of ground, so long as he remains firm in the saddle, and lightly feels the horse's mouth? Can he keep his eye exclusively on the enemy and on his proper place in the troop? Must he not look out carefully for every rock or furrow, disquiet the horse by pulling the rein, derange the formation of the troop? A leader brought up in this school cannot have the confidence to lead his closed division against the enemy, knowing that every potato

field, every new direction across or oblique to the furrows, loosens the formation. He prefers to send his cavalry against the enemy by troops or regiments, keeping a reserve on hand, rather than to ride across country with the whole formed in several lines. The vigour of the mounted man begins to decline at forty or fifty years of age. With our system of training, the leaders become accustomed to spend most of the time of duty in the riding school standing around dismounted. They become disused to riding, in war it becomes a hardship to them, and this has a bad influence upon the enterprise, the eagerness for the fray, the headlong charge upon the enemy with the whole mass.

H. But it is the division commander's duty to keep a formed reserve, and not charge upon the enemy with all his troops.

S. If cavalry cannot rally quickly, certainly. In the time of Frederick the Great, when cavalry rallied quickly at the first signal, you do not find any rule that charging cavalry was to have a reserve, because a closed reserve could be quickly formed upon giving the signal. The instructions of the Great King lay down the formations to be used for the charge of large bodies of cavalry—a first echelon, closed, in line. On each wing, overlapping, and at a distance of a few hundred paces, five or ten troops of hussars to assail the enemy in flank and rear, and pursue, also to cover the flank, then a second line (to-day we would call the hussars the second, his second line the third), which frequently follows directly in rear of the first, and is to fill up gaps. This formation the Great King prescribes for the charge of masses of cavalry of twice or three times the strength of a modern cavalry division. His masses of cavalry had to charge that way over all kinds of ground, without selecting level drill grounds.

H. I should think the cavalry, in those days, also had riding schools, rings, and drill grounds.

S. Yes, for the first training of the remounts and recruits, and for practising the first principles of elementary tactics. But inspections of troops or regiments were not made on the drill ground, nor of the riders in the riding school. The Great King inspected the cavalry on any kind of ground; he took position wherever he happened to be, and required the cavalry to charge toward him without the ranks becoming disordered by the ground.

H. Then you think that troops and regiments should now also be inspected on any kind of ground?

S. That alone would not be a thorough remedy, nor could it be carried out very well.

H. Why not?

S. Because our horses are not fitted for it by the winter course of training.

H. What has this training in winter to do with it?

S. If I wanted to explain it to you thoroughly, I would have to write a book about it. To-day I shall only give you an outline. Our horses are broken anew every year for seven months, and by what kind of riders? Look at that traverse, renverse, true gallop, which is



there sometimes—I can find no better expression—committed. The riders hang on by the reins and thus play ridingmaster for seven months in the year. A good remount rider may have broken a horse correctly for a year; next year it is perhaps all undone by a bad rider. The men get in the habit of believing that *kníbeln*\* and pulling back is riding, for the instructor strives to have his class pass well on inspection, to stand the test of the prescribed programme. If he does so, he is in favour, hence during these whole seven months he works with his class (be it the class of remount riders, second class or recruits), with the sole view to this inspection (inspection of riding with snaffle or final riding inspection). If he only passes according to the programme, he does not care what comes afterwards. The horses are thus tormented into unnatural paces; horses and men mistrained, for training, instead of being a means to an end for cavalry, becomes devoid of purpose and is mistaken for riding. There, by rude use of bit and thigh, spavin and curb are caused; there the rider hangs on by the reins and ruins the forehand by a gallop, in which the hindquarter flings instead of carries, and the weight is put upon the forehand. Many horses are already half broken down when presented at the final riding inspection. By this mode of training the horses are being stupefied during eleven months in the year, at least their intelligence as to the ground is not developed; they do not learn to look out for themselves. Would you lead a mass of horsemen across country with confidence if you knew that a large part of the horses were broken down, and if you had to anticipate that on uneven ground a large part of the horses would stumble over insignificant obstacles from sheer stupidity, and fall?

H. I begin to understand you.

S. I am not through yet. Through faulty breaking, many horses get into the habit of bolting. As long as the riding school and ring are used, the horse will stand the ill-treatment five times a week for three-quarters of an hour, but when he is taken out into the country, if he becomes excited, he puts his chin against the chest and bolts blindly, seeking relief. Two or three such bolters throw a whole troop into disorder, and many a troop has more than two or three of them. But nowadays the cause of the evil is never investigated at all. You can hear a troop commander say: "This horse is a bolter; that horse is broken down," as though it were a matter of fate; the same as one says: "It snows," or "It rains."

H. Can it be really as bad as that? On watching a troop at drill one sees but few crooked legs.

S. Yes, in the spring, but not in the fall. Then the troop commanders complain that the horses cannot stand the strain of the manœuvres. After the divisional manœuvres we have seen horses barely able to move, and which had to be dragged along by their dismounted riders into the garrison from the first rendezvous. What is the cause? That the winter training, instead of increasing the efficiency of the horses,

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\* Indiscriminate and faulty knee action of the rider.

has deformed, ruined them, and laid the seeds for breaking down, which only shows itself under the fatigues of the manoeuvres.

H. In what particular detail did the training of Frederick the Great differ from ours?

S. I can only touch upon this point briefly, but shall explain it in detail later on. In the time of Frederick the Great most horsemen were taught to ride and use their arms on well-broken horses only. The young riders were not allowed to break their own horses or teach them paces, but they left the riding school and ring for good as soon as they had learned how to ride, to exercise their horses at will (*tummeln*), as the Great King called it in his orders, in winter and summer, or to drill. Thus they learned how to ride in the terrain, to ride on frozen, smooth ground in winter, for they found time for it, because in those days the horses were not ill-treated by the rider's knee (*kniefeln*) in the riding school seven months in the year; nor were horses mistrained, because the horsemen, without aptitude for breaking horses, never learned at all how to train—mistrain—*kniefel* horses.

H. Then you think that riding in the school was not much thought of?

S. On the contrary, it was cultivated more, and more thoroughly than now. Only specially fitted horsemen, however, were trained in it after several years of service. They broke the remounts. The few recruits required by the troop, owing to the long term of service, were put on the best broken horses, where they at once learned the proper seat and touch; and if an awkward recruit happened to teach a horse a bad habit, it was at once turned over to an experienced old rider to rebreak it.

H. All this was well enough then, with the long term of service, requiring few recruits and furnishing many experienced horsemen of long service. But it seems to me impracticable with a three years' service.

S. Yet it is practicable in a modified way; I'll explain it to you at some other time. The transition from the long term to the short term of service, together with the universal liability to military service, did not take place properly. It is not the fault of our generation that we do not have a cavalry like that of the Great King; it is not the fault of those leaders who could not be in a position to lead great masses of cavalry. The system of training universally adopted after the Wars of Liberation is to blame, if the great-grand-children of the Seidlitzes, the Ziethens, the Driesens fall so far short of the ideals which formerly had been realities. You see I do not blame individuals; I do not censure anyone for insufficient achievements in the last wars; on the contrary, I defend them all. The principles of our present system of training are what need improvement.

H. Then you mean that, since 1815, our cavalry has gone backward?

S. I do not; the cavalry has advanced wonderfully, for in 1815 it was almost naught, as appears from the reports of Blücher, Thielemann, Borstel, and Marwitz. Since then it has worked hard and improved from year to year. I think now is the time to give the last impetus to bring it up to the level on which it stood in the time of the Great King.



H. A thousand questions are occurring to me which I would like to ask you on this point. I will arrange them in my mind and ask them at some other time.

S. I shall be glad to answer them, for night and day I am working in this, my vocation, and nothing gives me more pleasure than to talk it over. Then I will also explain to you how the principles of our training have brought on the influenza.

H. The influenza? You are joking; that is an epidemic, which like all epidemics, appears at intervals.

S. That is true; an epidemic, which like all epidemics is regarded by the great mass of the people as a public calamity, descended from heaven. But a thorough investigator proves that the mode of living renders the soil susceptible to the epidemic. Next he proves that a change of habits will make it impossible for the epidemic to take root. I tell you, the mode of life of our horses, due to the system of training, has brought on the influenza. In the time of Frederick the Great there was no influenza; now it is increasing from year to year.

H. That too, you must explain to me in detail.

S. I shall be glad to, the next time.

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## SECOND CONVERSATION. (NOVEMBER 20th, 1885.)

### OF THE TRAINING OF THE RECRUIT IN THE TIME OF FREDERICK THE GREAT.

H. You promised to answer the many questions which arose in my mind after our last conversation. First of all, what were the principles governing the individual training of Frederick's cavalry? I was unable to find any regulations or book in which they are laid down.

S. I quite believe you. For an art cannot be taught by written instructions. Its limits only may be fixed. Within these limits one must be skilled in it, because it is an art. He who is skilled in it, illustrates it by word of mouth and example. The schools of art are live schools only, teaching from mouth to mouth, from eye to eye. Science may be acquired from books alone, not so art, and the art of riding no more than that of painting.

H. Were all the horsemen of Frederick the Great artists in riding?

S. Certainly not, if thereby we mean the high school of equitation; but the art of campaign riding, which differs essentially from that of school riding, was highly developed.

H. Then you do not think school riding essential for campaign riding?

S. That is quite another question. I might say yes or no. School riding forms the foundation of everything necessary for campaign riding. Yet it is not necessary that every good campaign rider be a good school rider. Still less necessary is it that every good campaign rider should know how to train a horse for school riding.

H. Please explain. With us every horseman is taught, in his second and third year, how to make a horse obedient and how to put it to work.

S. Ah! now you touch the point which marks the great difference between the modern principles of training and those of the Great King.

H. How was the individual training conducted then?

S. I confess I find it difficult to begin, for I do not know whether to begin with the man or the horse. For the man is put on a trained horse to become a good rider; the horse is trained by a good rider to become a good horse.

H. That is the story of the egg and the hen. Which came first, the hen that laid the egg, or the egg from which the hen was hatched?

S. Quite so! Let us begin with the man. In those days the recruits were put on the best-trained and best-tempered horses.

H. That is also done at the present time.

S. It is, as far as practicable, but on account of the short term of service the number of our recruits has increased, while that of well-trained horses has decreased.

H. That brings us back to my former remark, that the short term of service prevents us from equalling our forefathers.

S. I state again that later on I shall explain to you my ideas as to how the demands on cavalry may be met in spite of the present term of service.

H. Very well, then. In order not to move in a circle let us confine ourselves to the principles of individual training at the middle of the last century.

S. Agreed. It was the endeavour then to teach the recruit how to ride well on a well-trained horse. It was not at all the intention to teach every rider how to train horses; it was sufficient if he learned how to sit well and firmly on a trained horse, ride in the ranks, use his arms, and have confidence in the ability of his horse, get across country, and know how to rally quickly when the ranks were disordered.

H. Is it not a requisite of a good rider to know how to break a horse?

S. That is exactly the error of the present time; it is not absolutely required of a good campaign rider.

H. But must not cavalry be able to break and train their own horses?

S. The cavalry, yes; but not every cavalry man. I can name you many excellent campaign riders of the present time, who never learned how to break a horse. Look at all the members of ruling houses, who have prominent places in the army; they are, almost without exception, excellent and bold riders, exemplary campaign riders, and, I am inclined to assert, that none of them ever had time to concern himself with the training of unbroken horses.

H. These gentlemen have equerries who break the horses for them; but you cannot detail an equerry to every recruit.

S. In a certain sense you can; from the old, trained riders, those

showing special aptitude are to be selected and trained as remount riders, who break the horses for the troop; that is what was done in those days.

H. And it is done to-day also, to a certain degree.

S. Only with this difference, that all the other men also are taught to dabble in breaking horses. This is plainly not only unnecessary, but injurious.

H. Nor were all the horses perfectly broken in those days.

S. It certainly also happened then that a rider who had gained some proficiency was given a horse which was imperfect in its gait, and had no incurable faults. But when the rider has once acquired a certain degree of efficiency on a good horse, he will gradually learn how to manage a less obedient horse, to put up with its faults, although unable to break the horse of them. Look at many of the above-named distinguished gentlemen; they finally, without having become riding masters, have tamed quite difficult horses sufficiently for use.

H. Let us return to our recruit. In those days he learned on a trained horse how to ride. What was demanded of him when presented for inspection?

S. We are not so far yet; there was no such thing then as presenting the recruit for inspection. Of this, however, hereafter.

H. How then were the recruits trained?

S. We ought not to say "the recruits," but "the recruit," for there were no squads of recruits, as we understand them, in the cavalry of Frederick the Great, in times of peace.

H. It is true, there were few recruits then. Marwitz, who joined the regiment of Gens d'Armes on January 2nd, 1790, estimates the average number of recruits for a "company" (half a squadron), of seventy-five horses and sixty-six privates, at eight per annum; hence it would seem that on an average every man served ten years. For a squadron, therefore, numbering 150 horses, including non-commissioned officers, some sixteen recruits must have been enlisted annually; that would still give a squad.

S. We may assume that under Frederick the Great the percentage of recruits was still smaller, for the horsemen made the soldier's trade their calling; therefore, unless great losses in battle called for a large number of recruits, it is probable that the squadron of 150 horses required annually, at the most, ten or twelve men. Losses in battle were, however, not fully replaced, for during the Seven Years' War the King's cavalry became greatly reduced in numbers; finally, its quality suffered also, on account of large additions of recruits, of which the King complains.

H. Let us then assume ten or twelve recruits per squadron, irrespective of the fact that there were squadrons of as many as 200 horses.

S. Very well. Let us assume ten or twelve. But they did not join the squadron together on a fixed date, but were enlisted as required. Thus the recruit, or two or three, were turned over to an old, trusty non-commissioned officer for instruction. He taught them how to ride, instructed

them in the use of arms and the details of the Service, and when the non-commissioned officer reported the instruction completed, they turned out with the troop.

H. Marwitz states that at the beginning of 1790 he first did duty, and then drilled with the troops at the end of March.

S. It is probable that things went as quickly as that with a young nobleman who had learned some riding before joining. The instruction of the ordinary recruit must have required more time.

H. In his professional opinion on cavalry, Marwitz assumes for the last decade of the past century that the man was a recruit for two years.

S. I do not think that it was quite so long before he drilled with the troop. But the main thing is that the recruit learned to acquire seat and touch on a perfectly broken horse. He who receives his first instruction in riding on a horse not thoroughly broken, imbibes with the mother milk, as it were, faulty habits.

H. That is easily explained; for if a horse fails to respond to the proper "aids," the beginner at once substitutes faulty ones.

S. You speak of aids much too soon. The first thing a rider has to learn is the seat. Upon a proper, firm, secure seat, depends the rider's independence of the motions of the horse. Only he who has learned how to sit, and to sit correctly, is able to use his lower leg at will and as ordered, in handling the reins as well as the arm. Only he who sits correctly is able to use his lower leg as he wants to, and as he ought to.

H. That is plain. For he who has no seat, but holds on with his hands by the mane and with the heels by the flanks in order not to fall off, can neither handle the reins nor apply his legs as a rider should do.

S. That is an extreme case, but it illustrates the many shades of this kind of thing. It would, therefore, be desirable, if practicable, not to instruct the beginner in the use of the leg and reins, nor to allow him their use until he has learned to maintain a correct seat at all gaits.

H. How could that be done?

S. Only by the use of the longe, and by not putting any reins in the hands of the beginner. But the same result can be gained approximately, by requiring in the beginning, until the seat is firm, a steady position of the hand and normal slope of the thigh, and by not saying anything of the management of the reins or application of the thigh, until the seat has become firm.

H. In that case the horse could run away with the beginner.

S. It is not so bad as it would seem. Only the horse must be well trained, for even the seat alone can be taught the recruit on a well-broken horse only, which shows a faulty seat by wrong motions, so that the rider only feels secure when he has a proper seat.

H. Then you require for every recruit a horse perfectly trained in the school of equitation.

S. That would be neither practicable nor useful; for horses too

nically trained would play all kinds of tricks induced by the involuntary and unconscious actions of the rider. For the campaign rider a horse well broken to campaign riding will do.

H. Then you do not think a too-highly-trained horse adapted to campaign riding?

S. A horse trained only in the high school of equitation cannot well endure the long gaits of campaign riding.

H. Then you think that for campaign riding the high school can be dispensed with?

S. The high school will ever be the basis of the principles of the individual training of cavalry. A cavalry that has no school horses at all gradually loses sight of the proper course of horse breaking and instruction in riding.

H. How many school horses per squadron would you think necessary?

S. Not a single one per squadron; for it cannot have a rider that can ride according to the high school. School horses should be kept only in the Central\* Riding School, the only place where the knowledge of proper "aids" in riding is to be developed to the highest perfection in some specially gifted riders; but there at the Standard Institution the high school must never cease to be cultivated.

H. I enticed you into a digression from our theme. We had come to the point that the recruit must, in the first place, learn how to sit before he is made acquainted with the uses of the thigh and rein. He must learn them afterwards.

S. Not for a long time yet. He must learn how to turn to the right and left; he must learn how to drive the horse forward with his legs; how to hold him back by the reins; he must learn how to ride at the three gaits—walk, trot, and gallop (in this instruction it would, at first, be a matter of indifference whether the horse galloped with near or off fore leading); he must learn how to stop him, rein him, back, and support him. He must thus learn to employ the legs and reins as a kind of conventional language spoken to the horse, but he must not regard them as the *science* of the "aids." That is all that he needs in the ranks and in the field; and when he has learned the use of arms, he is ready to drill with the troop.

H. Do you mean to say that in the cavalry of the Great King the recruit was so soon put into the ranks?

S. I am sure of it. Under Seidlitz he was put between two reliable men, who would "cuff" him into his place, if he could not manage his horse. Tradition also has it that Seidlitz put the least courageous, *i.e.*, the youngest recruits, into the front rank. The old soldiers in the rear rank had to watch them and drive them forward, if in the charge they did not ride fast enough, by "tickling" them, if necessary, with their sabres. This, it is true, was a little harsh, and would hardly be allowed at the present day.

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\* The author here refers to the riding school at Hanover, which has the designation "Central Riding Institution."—TRANSLATOR.

H. But Marwitz says that in his first drills he rode in the rear rank. I am always quoting Marwitz, because he is the only one from whom I could find out anything of the interior service of the cavalry of the last century. He also states (Vol. I., p. 46) that in his first charge his horse bolted through the front rank, past the officers and went to "the devil." "I deserved the flat of the sabre," he says, "but fortunately escaped with being laughed at."

S. A fourteen-year old child could not very well be put in the front rank, and an exception was probably made with such a young gentleman. You may infer from this, however, how rarely then a horse bolted, if the rider got the "flat of the sabre" for it. (I refer to my statement in our last conversation, that in those days the horses did not bolt.)

H. But were they not rather liberal with the "flat of the sabre"?

S. Less than is generally supposed. There may have been exceptions. Generally they were humane, kept in view the well-being of the subordinates, and observed the prescribed rules.

H. What did the recruits do when sufficiently advanced to drill with the troop, which seems to have been practicable after six months' drill? But Marwitz speaks of recruits of two years' service, and says that they rode one hour daily.

S. These statements of Marwitz prove that in the last decade of the century the cavalry no longer strictly adhered to the principles of Frederick the Great. For the Great King demanded two hours of outdoor exercise daily for every horse. Even on Sundays the horses had to have their outdoor exercise before church, under the first sergeant.

H. But they did not drill out of doors every day, winter and summer. Hence they must have ridden for some time in the riding school or in the ring.

S. The King says: "The day is lost on which the rider has not exercised his horse." This exercise was devoted to individual riding. The King laid great stress on it as a prerequisite for rallying. In this kind of riding the trooper learned how to turn his horse in all directions at all gaits, how to clear obstacles and go over uneven ground at full gallop, and how to use his arms without losing his seat. He said: "Whoever cannot stand a long gallop, is not an efficient cavalryman."

H. Then it seems to have been the custom to always sound the rally at the end of this individual riding.

S. Not only that, but the individual riding was also practised as essential for rallying quickly. For he who, at any time and under all circumstances, can quickly put his horse in motion at any gait and in any direction, can get quickly to the place designated for rallying.

H. It must be clear to anyone, even if he has never been on a horse himself, that cavalry capable of rallying quickly is worth twice or three times as much as one which, after the first charge, is out of the leader's hand for the rest of the day. For this reason the King directed that after every closed charge the command to disperse be given, "not that it should be done in the face of the enemy, but that it be explained



to the men that it was done only for practice in rallying. For, after contact with the enemy, the lads will always be dispersed."

S. On this point, then, we agree. But rallying must be practised daily and not during drill only, otherwise these principles will not become second nature to the men. At first it was thoroughly practised on foot, especially by those riders (recruits) who were not yet sufficiently masters of their horses to do it mounted, merely to teach them what direction to take. When rallying is practised in the drill season only, it is too late and the work is thrown away.

H. I suppose there are a good many things besides charges that will throw cavalry into disorder?

S. Certainly; and in such cases it is very important that the cavalry should rally quickly and be ready for action. A troop which can rally quickly has confidence in itself, and the leader in it, for he knows that he can rely on his troop. It fosters enterprise and boldness in the charge. Do you think that Ziethen at Rothschild, in 1741, would have ridden across country; that the cavalry at Hohenfriedberg would have crossed the Striegau in the face of the enemy; that Seidlitz at Zorndorf would have dared to break his whole mass of cavalry into column of troops riding across country and to pass the deep water of the Zubern, if these leaders had not been confident that whenever the troops became disordered by the ground, order could quickly be restored by rallying?

H. But the drill and manœuvre seasons were but a small part of the year. Marwitz mentions a drill season of nine weeks in the spring (from March 16th to May 23rd), one of three weeks before the special review, one of three weeks in the fall, and there were manœuvres besides, which, including the march to and from the garrison, could not have exceeded three weeks. That makes nineteen weeks. That leaves thirty-three weeks of the year. I do not believe they spent all these thirty-three weeks in individual riding; besides, I do not see how supervision could have been exercised over every individual rider.

S. In any case, in the times of Frederick the Great, old riders on old horses were never put into the riding school. This is proven by the small size of the riding school and rings in those days. However, you must not think that in individual riding every rider was allowed to ride how and where he pleased. The rider was constantly and diligently practised in leaving the ranks and quickly reaching the place to which he was called. Nor did the rider exercise his horse at will, so long as his training was not completed, but as he was ordered, and for such a time and at such gaits as were prescribed.

H. In that case they must have been divided into classes, each under charge of its own non-commissioned officer or officer.

S. I think so too, and that officers and non-commissioned officers superintended the men of their own squads.

H. There are seasons of the year when outdoor exercise is out of the question. At such seasons recourse must be had to the riding school and to riding by squads, with distances.

S. It should be made a principle that the covered schools are to be

used only for recruits, remounts, and such recruits of the past year and such horses as are to be trained over again.

The squadron always rides in the open. If the rings cannot be used, if it is very cold or raining too much, the troop simply turns out for horse exercise.

Riding in the school only leads to parade work ; riding in the open makes the practical riders we want in the field ; riding in all kinds of weather keeps men and horses healthy, makes them hard, and trains them for field service.

There is no lack of interesting exercises if there be a sufficient number of men to form one of two troops ; they may be drilled, practised in marching, or drilling in single rank, etc. War may break out at any time ; how then about the closed riding, the charges, the passage of defiles, and the movements for forming in close order, when even the old soldiers have not been practised in them for months ?

H. I return to my first question : What was done during the thirty-three weeks in which there was no drill, or, if we deduct four or five weeks during which the troops were compelled to use the school, in the remaining twenty-eight or nine weeks ? Only individual riding and rallying ?

S. And the use of arms and riding across country. You see if the rider, who has learned to sit well and use rein and thigh merely as a means of communicating his wish to the horse, learns in the first year how to ride over uneven ground instead of tormenting his horse in the school ; if he executes on horseback gymnastic exercises, and all kinds of preparatory exercises for the use of the sabre without changing his seat or fretting the horse with the reins, he gains more steadiness of seat for work under all circumstances than he would in the school. The officer in charge must see that the recruit sits easily, feels the reins lightly and uses them seldom, disturbs the horse as little as possible by "aids," and inspires confidence in his horse. The horse of course must be steady, fresh, and obedient, then the horse will also gain confidence in the rider ; and the oftener they ride across country and clear obstacles, the more practice the horse gets and the better the horseman likes it.

H. That is true ; I saw it in the paper chases instituted for very poor riders from the infantry. They finally rode across country previously deemed impracticable for horses, nor did anyone remain behind or meet with an accident.

S. Yes ; what all mounted infantry officers can do, the cavalry private must surely be able to learn. It is only a question of getting the necessary time for it, and not spending it in useless, soul-killing school riding, which only serves to make an imperfect rider believe that he is a perfect horseman.

H. Were not these riding squads finally inspected ? Certainly you cannot let the officers and non-commissioned officers do as they like for twenty-nine weeks in the year, and go riding wherever they please ? There must have been some regular control over their exercises, and a regular repetition of the instruction in the same, and I know of no other



opportunity for control and instruction than the inspection. If you wish to control cavalry you must inspect the riding squads.

S. This constitutes one of the principal differences in the interior service of the cavalry of the Great King and our own. Inspections, and very thorough ones too, were also made then, the cavalry was rigidly inspected, but never were riding squads in the school presented to the inspector. The school was considered a necessary evil, and school riding as a means to the end of acquiring campaign riding; the result only, campaign riding, was inspected. ))

H. Was only the drill of the whole troop inspected then?

S. Oh, no, certainly not; on the contrary, the riding of the individual was then closely watched, but only with reference to his fitness for practical work. Seidlitz went so far as to ride alongside some private soldiers when going over difficult country, or jumping ditches and hurdles, in order to see for himself how they acted.

H. How much stress Seidlitz laid upon the observation of the individual, and how thorough he was in it, appears from the anecdote that he held a dollar between his fingers as a target for some good shot. The latter had to hit it with the pistol, and was then allowed to keep it. ! 3a-

S. And how much stress the King himself laid upon the individual riding, I have mentioned above.

H. Then you really think that in those days whole riding squads were never inspected?

S. All I can learn on this point confirms me in this opinion; besides, it is quite rational to have formal inspections of the result of the training only, not of the means by which it is accomplished, because, otherwise, the means is apt to be mistaken for the end, or the end to be lost sight of through too close attention to the means. And here there is a special temptation, in the performances in the riding school, to engage in some showy tricks, which are hurtful to the horse, spoil the rider, and impair the campaign riding. It is rational therefore to make inspections only of the several units, when the school of the troop or regiment has been completed, but not of the riding squad in the riding school. In these inspections of the troop, for instance, the individual riding can be inspected.

H. I cannot imagine that in those days the superiors should have resigned the method of instruction and waited quietly for the result, for, all control over, there would have been danger of having this or that entirely spoiled before necessary connections were made.

S. This the superiors in those days certainly did not do, but they convinced themselves frequently by their own presence, whether the instruction in riding was properly imparted.

H. But that is a kind of inspection too.

S. With some difference! For if the instructor does not know when the superior will be present at the instruction, he cannot get ready for it and prepare a riding exhibition for which he specially drills his men; and this he can do and is bound to do if he knows that the inspection

will take place at the end of the riding course previously laid out, and for which he drills his squad as for a quadrille.

H. I should think that whenever the instructor reported a recruit proficient, the superior would have satisfied himself as to the riding of the recruit before giving his consent that he should drill with the troop.

S. That was probably done; but in that case the efficiency of the recruit in individual riding was tried, for you must not forget that the squadron as a completely trained unit never ceased to exist. (For if we assume for a squadron of 150 horses fifteen remounts per year, which turn out with the squadron in the third or fourth year, and twelve recruits per year who turn out after six months' training, there were still at least 100 horses available in each squadron for drill or other purposes.) Marwitz assumed eight recruits for each company, *i.e.*, sixteen recruits per squadron annually. If we assume ten or twelve in Seidlitz's time, then there were two recruits assigned to each squadron every two months.

H. That of course would be impossible now, when we receive nearly one-third of our recruits each year, and when, after dismissing the reserves, the squadron is as good as disbanded and must be re-organised.

S. That is true. We must take into consideration the three years' (or four for the four-year Volunteers) term of service.

H. And how?

S. I have duly considered this point and made my plans. I shall explain them to you at some future time. The next time let us discuss the training of the older soldiers and training of the horses in the days of the Great King.

### THIRD CONVERSATION. (DECEMBER 6th, 1885.)

#### OF THE TRAINING OF THE OLDER SOLDIERS IN THE TIME OF FREDERICK THE GREAT.

H. In order not to prolong indefinitely my questions about the training of the cavalryman of the past century, I have brought with me those of the writings of General von der Marwitz, which contain so many details of the service in those days.

S. I am perfectly willing to accept as a basis, the service as it was when that General entered it, *i.e.*, in the last decade of the eighteenth century; I must repeat, however, that even then the cavalry was no longer in the zenith of its efficiency. The cavalry of Frederick the Great reached its greatest perfection at the time of the beginning of the Seven Years' War, and again about ten years after the Peace of Hubertsburg.

H. It is natural that the efficiency of cavalry should suffer, used up as it was by seven years of war. In 1763 there were probably left but few well-trained privates of 1756, and probably no horses at all which, in 1756, had been well broken; it is also probable that a systematic and thorough

training of men and horses was impracticable during the seven years, in which no part of Prussia remained untouched by the war. But why should the efficiency of cavalry have decreased after 1774, since the Great King was still living?

S. It is a constantly recurring fact that, as time passes, the rust of peace attacks armies, unless it is kept off by men whose first consideration is the requirements of war, and who, holding the latter in fresh remembrance, take care that the rust be removed. Seidlitz was dead; Ziethen was very old; the King could not supervise everything in person, and probably had no longer the strength to do so. Briefly, from all we read and know of the time from 1774 to 1786, it appears that our cavalry, in all its regiments, was no longer what it used to be.

H. All old people in all walks of life, say: "When I was young it was different." As Colonel of Hussars in the campaigns against France from 1792 to 1795, Blücher accomplished remarkable successes.

S. Yes, Blücher did; and many an individual regimental commander did also. But of the use of masses of cavalry the history of the campaigns on the Rhine says nothing. One would think that in these campaigns the first levies of the French Republic, without proper organisation and discipline, should have been swept off the field like chaff before the wind, by the use, in masses, of Frederick's cavalry.

H. To return to Marwitz; in his narrative of the time when he became a lieutenant, he says that he was constantly at work from 3.30 a.m. to 7 p.m., of which time he spent at least six hours on horseback, for the Estandarten Junkers (ensigns) were required to ride two horses, one in each squad. Hence there was riding by squad.

S. But he was still a recruit. The first instruction in riding had probably to be given by squads.

H. He joined for duty (January, 1790) shortly before the drill season, beginning in March. Then (on the same page) he writes:—"Duty was light except during drill time. For there was daily but one small squad that rode or drilled dismounted. The Junker, while such, belonged to that squad for good."

S. There we already have a considerable difference between the service in Marwitz's time and in that of the Great King. During that last decade there was but one small squad that daily rode or drilled dismounted; thus this small squad did not even ride every day. But Frederick II. stated, as I have already mentioned, that the day was lost on which the rider did not exercise his horse; and he had them exercised even on Sundays. Furthermore, it does not follow at all that the squad in question rode in the school of the squad in the *manège* or school. If you look you will find that in the appendix to his essay on the decline of the Prussian cavalry, Marwitz only speaks of the drill of the squadron and of individual riding. He even complains that, for three weeks in the fall, there were but forty men per company present for drill, and that there was no individual riding at all.

H. Let us stop at this appendix to Marwitz's essay. According to this there were one-half of the sixty-six men of the troop, *i.e.*, thirty-three,

on furlough. These furloughed men were called in from March 16th to May 23rd, and were given individual riding for three weeks; after that there was troop drill daily for three weeks; and, after the special review, only a sufficient number of the furloughed men were retained with the company to enable it to turn out with twenty-four files. In the fall there was drill for three weeks with forty men, eight or ten furloughed men being called in. Thus he calculates that every furloughed man mounted his horse only twenty-seven times, the few who were detained in the service until the great review thirty-six times, and those again called in in the fall, forty-five times altogether. That, then, was all the cavalry work done by one-half of the men of this much-renowned cavalry, which we are to take for our model! I think that one of our four-year volunteers, who, during his last two years of service, mounts his horse five times per week, *i.e.*, 500 times in two years, can gain as much skill in riding as an old soldier of thirteen years' service of those days, who, after his first two recruit years, mounted his horse but forty-five times per year at the highest.

S. No exception can be taken to this calculation. I can only repeat that this was not the time when our cavalry had reached the climax of perfection. The system of furloughed men was the outcome of constantly increasing retrenchment and economy, beginning a long time after the three Silesian Wars; and it became more and more extended, because it was of pecuniary benefit to the chiefs who, under the law, were allowed to pocket the pay of the furloughed men. This system of furloughed men became gradually extended, and, toward the end of the 18th century, it reached such dimensions as to greatly impair the efficiency of the cavalry, and the infantry too, as you read in Höpfner's "History of the War of 1806."

H. Do you think there were no furloughed men in Seidlitz's time?

S. There were some; but they were kept in practice and under control, as Varnhagen von Ense tells us.

H. The money for the furloughed men's pay went into the pockets of the captains?

S. In order to reimburse them for many expenses which were required of them, and of which we now have no idea; for up to the beginning of this century it was customary for the officers to be daily guests at their captains' tables.

H. Then there was also the system of *Freiwächter*, of which Marwitz complains. The law provided ten of them per company. They took part mounted only when the whole regiment turned out.

S. This system must also have impaired the efficiency of the cavalry, for Marwitz says that they were poorer riders than the furloughed men, which does not surprise me.

H. Lastly, Marwitz calculates that, of the remaining twenty-three men, the recruits for two years, *i.e.*, sixteen men, are to be deducted, leaving seven men with whom there was a possibility of their being good riders at the end of their terms of service.

S. Here I must check up Marwitz's calculation. He figured

seventy-five horses and sixty-six privates per company. For whom were the remaining nine horses?

H. For the first sergeant and non-commissioned officers, of course.

S. There we have nine more excellent riders. I will subtract one more from the above-mentioned seven men, assuming that a man in his fourth year of service, even when riding daily, was not counted among the good riders. But the other six privates must have had much practice in riding. They were soldiers by trade, remained in the Service until invalided, and assuming for the eight recruits to the sixty-six men an average term of service of sixteen years (counting in former losses), then, of the seven privates remaining constantly in the Service, one must have been in the sixteenth, fourteenth, twelfth, tenth, eighth, sixth, and fourth year of service each. The six oldest ones must have been good riders, for the poor riders were probably got rid of as *Freiwächter* or furloughed men. We may, therefore, say that at the end of the past century there were still probably fifteen good riders (exclusive of officers) in the troop, or thirty in the squadron.

H. But that is not of decisive importance.

S. It is; for you must consider that these fifteen or thirty riders, respectively, who were then called good riders, were much farther advanced in the art of riding than the best riders we now have among the non-commissioned officers and privates of a squadron. Thus the squadron had thirty men who were excellent riders, and could be entrusted with the breaking of remounts. The steadiest, lightest, and most intelligent ones could be selected for the youngest remounts, and there still remained enough picked riders to ride the older remounts, rebreak spoiled horses, and break some horses to school riding.

H. Did that make better campaign riders of the great mass of horsemen?

S. Certainly; for the recruit mounted a horse better and more correctly broken to campaign riding than is often the case now. He thus received from the beginning a proper feel on horseback; he acquired a correct seat on a horse of correct paces. If a recruit receives his first instruction on a mistrained horse, the bad habits of the latter give him a faulty seat and hand, which are incorrigible, and in consequence of which, when he is entrusted with breaking horses, he teaches them bad habits unconsciously and involuntarily. But when the recruit receives his riding lessons on a correctly going campaign horse, he will learn more riding in the first two years than another in four years who learns riding on a horse of faulty paces. But the principal point is, he will never spoil a horse; because he has, from the outset, that feeling one ought to have on a good horse.

H. This is obvious, for it is an old, well-known cavalry rule that the recruit horse breaks the recruit just as much as the remount rider breaks the remount.

S. Now just think what a help it would be for a squadron to have thirty such fine riders.

H. You mean to say that the squadron does not now possess thirty good riders?

S. It may possess thirty or more riders who now may be called good riders, but none of whom would then have been counted amongst those seven mentioned by Marwitz. If, in addition, we consider that in the best times of cavalry, in 1756 and 1774, there were neither *Freiwächter* nor furloughed men in such numbers, you must concede that a squadron possessed not thirty, but perhaps one hundred, well-trained riders, of whom one-half, having special aptitude, might be called excellent riders.

H. When I consider this and assume that in the time of the Great King there were perhaps still fewer recruits, because the men remained in the Service longer than in Marwitz's time, then it follows, of course, that the squadron, leaving out sixteen remounts and perhaps two recruits, was always completely trained, winter and summer, and ready for the field at any time. But now the question comes: "What did the finished part of the squadron do throughout the year?" for the troops must have had an awfully dull time, when nothing was left to be done in the way of training.

S. Seidlitz never allowed time to hang heavily on the hands of his cavalry. A squadron of, say, 100 horses, with its training complete, had plenty of exercises to practise the whole year round. Let us suppose there was a drill season of two months in the spring, and a practice season of two months in the summer and fall for drill of larger bodies and manœuvres; there remained eight months which, in your opinion, were not utilised. But those eight months could be used to good purpose to practise things for which we have no time now, but which must be practised thoroughly if cavalry is to serve its purpose fully.

H. What are those things?

S. Individual instruction, use of arms, marches before the enemy, riding under difficulties (obstacles, heavy ground, ice), rallying, passage of defiles and deployment upon emerging from the defiles, passage of fords, swimming. During all these exercises, that part of the troop not belonging to the remounts or recruits drilled at least once a week in the school of the squadron, in order to remain in a constant state of efficiency.

H. You have already informed me fully of the value placed upon individual riding by Frederick the Great; but, as to the use of arms, I am inclined to believe that it was not in a higher state of perfection in those days than now.

S. Do you think there are now many regiments that possess sufficient proficiency in the use of the sabre and lance?

H. I have observed but few regiments in detail; of the two regiments belonging to the division under my command, the one was as proficient in the use of the sabre and the other in that of the lance as could be expected.

S. Quite so! As proficient as could be expected—considering how little time is devoted to it now. And, besides, these two regiments are



perhaps shining exceptions. In many of the other regiments there are few of the older soldiers able to make a vigorous cut from the horse while in motion, or to touch with the lance a certain point. Under Seidlitz this was not sufficient; there the individual combat of man against man, of cavalryman against infantryman, armed with the bayonet, was practised assiduously, and all the older soldiers possessed great skill in it.

H. Instead of this, much time is now devoted to instruction in the use of fire-arms; do not our hussars shoot well with the carbine, while formerly there was a saying: "Whoever is hit by a cavalryman's pistol must believe in predestination"?

S. This saying originated in the Wars of Liberation and those subsequent to them. Seidlitz laid great stress upon skill in pistol-firing, and made his men fire at the target from a gallop, and "even load at full speed and fire with deliberate aim." (Varnhagen von Ense.) You may imagine how much time was required before the men acquired anything like proficiency.

H. The effect of cavalry fire is much more intense now than 100 years ago, because of the improvement in fire-arms. But, leaving out the quality of fire-arms, the men were better shots then in comparison; they practised more, especially the firing from horseback. But you were speaking of warlike marches. I should think they are sufficiently practised during drill and manœuvres.

S. Not at all; for when the troops turn out for drill and manœuvres they cannot make their marches as long as is desirable, because they must save their strength for drill and manœuvres. In your letters on cavalry you have shown yourself how important it is for a cavalry division to be able to make forced marches of fifty kilometres per day. You have pointed out that it requires practice to observe all those details which tend to save the strength of man and horse, when such great demands are made on them. Do you believe that, with six such forced marches of a whole division as proposed by you, you would accomplish anything but the ruin of a large number of horses, unless each squadron had had practice in making such long marches and sparing the horses as much as possible at the same time?

H. You are right there.

S. But the trooper must also learn how to march in different seasons of the year. With snow and ice on the ground, other things have to be observed than at the time of the fall manœuvres; and all this requires practice and experience; it cannot be learned from books or looked up in a compendium at the moment of action.

H. Referring to what you further said of riding on difficult ground and rallying, I think we have plenty of time to practise it during drill.

S. Not at all; it must not be omitted during drill whenever there is an opportunity. But riding over all and any kind of ground should be practised more than is possible under our present conditions of service. In those seasons of the year when we can march over the fields without doing damage, all riders are now confined to the ring. Under Seidlitz,

they were dashing over snow-covered fields; there the rider convinced himself of the possibility of passing over any kind of ground; there the horse learned how to act, if only the rider did not fret it with the rein, and kept a steady and firm seat. All ground of such character throws troops into disorder; but when each individual rider understands how to get over such ground, the troop can learn to rally quickly from the apparent disorder and be ready for a closed charge.

H. Did not many horses hurt themselves and become ruined during these numerous exercises under Seidlitz on any kind of ground?

S. Much fewer than are now ruined by the awkwardness of horse and rider, when the troop for once gets into that kind of ground, unless previously taught how to act there. I remind you of what you told me yourself of the paper chases of infantry officers.

H. You mentioned the passage of defiles and the deployment upon debouching from the same. That, it seems, is merely a matter of drill. When the squadron has learned how to form front into line from column of threes, it knows how to deploy from a defile.

S. There, like many others, you are in error. From column of twos or threes the troop can only begin to form front into line in the manner prescribed in the drill regulations, when the rear of the column has left the defile and has room to march to the right or left oblique without disorder. But the troop must be able to begin the deployment from the defile as soon as the head of the column emerges from the same. If this is practised on various and uneven ground, the troop can be formed for the charge quicker by the depth of the whole column. Such deployments from defiles are closely connected with quick rallying after passing over difficult ground, which loosens the order. For a mass of cavalry, formed in several lines and advancing on a broad front, meets with various ground. Here a squadron has to break into columns to cross a bridge over an impassable ditch; there another has to give up the close formation on account of marshy ground or other difficult terrain, or it must pass in seeming disorder through wooded or bushy country; another comes upon a village and has to use the village street. Immediately beyond is the enemy; if the mass knows how to rally quickly, or to form line rapidly from the defile, it will be ready to charge without loss of time. If any time is required, however, the enemy has the advantage, awaiting as he does the cavalry just beyond the difficult ground. At the Striegauer Wasser (Hohenfriedberg), the Austro-Saxon cavalry stood ready at charging distance waiting for the Prussian cavalry, and thought it utterly impossible that the latter should be able to make a close charge immediately after passing that ground. But the Prussian cavalry had been practised in such work; it quickly assumed a closed formation, surprised and defeated the enemy.

H. The first extra number of the *Militair-Wochenblatt* of this year (1885) contains a similar incident from the battle of Chotusitz. The difficult terrain consists of several ditches with marshy and overgrown banks (loosening of the closed order); on the right flank is a creek with few passages (breaking into column and forming line), and on the



left is the marshy Doubrawa. "The first line succeeds in passing the difficult ground, rallies quickly, breaks through both lines of the opposing Austrian cavalry, charges their reserves, throws the 3,000 Croats and two infantry regiments of the second line into disorder."

S. But the second line?

H. The second line did not succeed in passing the same terrain; it had to pass through the village of Chotusitz and was met beyond by cuirassiers and hussars. In spite of its bravery the second line was defeated, "because the remaining seven squadrons had not been able to follow."

S. It would seem that this second line was not as well practised in passing difficult ground and forming line after passing a defile as the regiments composing the first line.

H. That is possible, unless the soft ground was so much dug up by the first line that the second line stuck fast in it. Such things happen. The King, in a letter to Prince Dessau, writes: "The action of part of our cavalry was very brave and heroic." He does not seem, however, to have been entirely satisfied with the "quick sounding of the assembly" and the "quick rallying." At least, he issued the regulations for the cavalry and the dragoons a month later while in camp at Kuttendorf; and he had a squadron of the regiment Gens d'Armes turn out repeatedly in the same camp and commanded it in person, to show "how squadrons were to drill in changes of direction at a gallop, how to disperse, and how to rally quickly upon the trumpet signal. All generals, field officers, and squadron commanders were required to be present at these exercises."

S. The King reaped the fruits of these exercises three years later at Hohenfriedberg. To be able to do this, however, requires that all the men be practised in it frequently. It also follows from the result of these regulations—which bore such fruit within three years—that it does not require a term of service of ten or twenty years to teach the men, so long as they are practised constantly and industriously. Seidlitz's movements at Rossbach and Zorndorf would also have been impossible if the cavalry had been thrown into disorder by every obstacle of the terrain.

H. There were fewer obstacles then than there are now. The increased cultivation of the ground has changed many a wide plain into cut-up ground.

S. That is one of the favourite sayings of modern times, by which, on the one hand, it is attempted to show that less or no cavalry at all is needed now; and which, on the other hand, is used as an excuse when the cavalry is no longer as efficient as it was 100 years ago. I admit that increased cultivation has rendered much of the terrain more difficult; but that should only be one more reason why the passage of such ground should be practised. Nor were there entirely smooth plains 140 years ago everywhere that cavalry had to charge.

H. Under the orders of the Great King, cavalry had invariably to send forward some scouts, even officers, to examine and report upon the ground in front as to its practicability.

S. In general, yes ; in special, it was frequently impossible. If you follow the routes taken by Seidlitz at Rossbach and Zorndorf, when and where he came into line and charged, you will agree with me that he could not have waited for reports to come in of every ditch, etc. ; in that case he would surely have been too late. On the other hand, if he had not been sure that his cavalry could preserve or at least quickly regain the close formation and readiness to charge, in spite of all difficulties unexpectedly presented by the ground, he would not have ventured such movements with such large bodies, because he would have considered them foolhardy.

H. Was he not foolhardy and very lucky ?

S. Not at all. He knew very well what he could risk, and when and where. He refused to obey the King's order at Zorndorf, when the latter ordered the charge too soon ; and answered, when threatened with beheading, that "after the battle his head would be at the King's disposal, but that while the battle lasted he meant to use it himself in the King's interest."

H. Lastly, you mentioned the passage of fords as a special practice. I do not see why this should require special practice. A ford is a place in the river where the water is so shallow that it can be crossed by wagons or horses without swimming. There is no special art about it that has to be practised. The only difficulty which might present itself would be a dislike to enter the water on the part of the horses ; but there are many horses which like to go into the water, and do so fearlessly. Put them at the head to lead, and the others will follow, like one sheep will follow another.

S. That is a wrong opinion, shared by the cavalry to a great extent. When the water is only a few inches deep and not rapid, it can be done that way, but then the ford is not worth mentioning. It is different when the water is so deep that it reaches to the horse's belly or higher, and when the river has some current. If a large body of cavalry rides through it in the dense marching column, it forms a kind of dam from one bank to the other, above which the water will be checked, while below it flows off and its depth decreases. This causes a constantly increasing pressure of water, which pushes the horses down stream. Now, if every rider follows the man in front of him, this drifting down stream increases constantly ; for if the first file drifts down 1 foot, the second file drifts 2 feet ; the twentieth, 20 feet. The column soon forms a line concave toward the current, the water being checked most where the current is swiftest. Finally, the pressure of water becomes so great that the horses are no longer able to resist it, and the higher the water rises the more it lifts the horses, so that their weight is insufficient to insure a good foothold. The column is suddenly torn asunder by the force of the water ; the horses in the middle of the current are carried down stream, where the river is not fordable, and are in danger of being helplessly drowned.

H. Then the men must so ride through the ford that the road

*S. Horses  
called River*

they follow in the water forms an arc convex to the direction of the current?

S. That is easier said than done; for, in the first place, it is a question whether the line followed by the ford and its width admit of making such a convex arc; and in the second place, when the men cover in file, the current will soon make a straight line of the convex arc in the manner just indicated, and finally a concave arc, if the body of troops is large (division) and the crossing takes much time. It is necessary that this body of cavalry ride through the ford by troops, leaving distances between the troops to allow the water to flow off that it may not be checked. Each troop should also have a guide knowing the ford. This can be accomplished if the leader of each troop observes the direction in which the head of the troop in front of him is led, that he may take the same direction and follow the rear of the column. But then, and especially if the current is strong, it becomes necessary that the troop ride through the ford, not in the prescribed marching order, but in the "pulk,"\* each horse's head being held above the rump of the next horse up stream. All the horses must also be held with their heads somewhat obliquely to the current, like the bow of a ferry boat. But it is absolutely necessary that no horse or rider be afraid of the water. They must be familiar with it, in order not to make fatal mistakes from fear of the water or from thoughtlessness. A horse unfamiliar with the water seeks with its front feet for some object on which to gain a foothold. Thus it happens that it tries to place its front feet on the croup of the horse in front, pulling it down and making mischief. It is also to be observed that every man riding for the first time through water is inclined to look down into the water. Where there are eddies or whirlpools, it causes a turning sensation and consequent faulty guidance of the horse. The riders must practise looking steadily at the point on the farther bank which they mean to reach. The rider must incline his body against the stream, so that if he becomes separated from his horse, he may get into the water above the horse, as otherwise he would be in danger. It is also very necessary that the rider preserve the regulation seat and thus give the horse the accustomed hold. He who is afraid of wet feet and pulls up his legs, loses all control over his horse at the moment of danger.

H. I see; the troops must previously be well and thoroughly instructed.

S. Instruction alone accomplishes nothing. Practice alone gives safety. Instruction must precede practice, which must progress from the easier to the more difficult. The horses must go into water willingly and confidently. This is necessary, in order that a ford may not prove an insurmountable obstacle to an individual patrol. To cross the ford with a large body, however, it is necessary that all horses know how to swim under the rider, and that the riders have learned to act so that, when the depth of the water increases and the horses have to swim at the deepest places, they may not lose their heads.

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\* A Cossack formation.

H. Did the cavalry of Seidlitz practice fording frequently?

S. In his "Life of Seidlitz," Varnhagen von Ense tells us how fording was made the subject of frequent and special practice. They even drilled in the river Ohle, *i.e.*, forming line and breaking into column of threes. I believe, however, that the more frequent practice of fording was also due to the then circumstances. For in those days there were many more fords than now, when the communications are in so much better condition and bridges have been built everywhere. Fords were then crossed every day. The cavalry of those days could also swim, hence it must have had practice. The history of the Seven Years' War furnishes many examples of large bodies of cavalry crossing rivers by swimming.

H. I shall have to ask you many more questions about swimming, when we come to the training of the horse. For the present, I beg to state that I am not much impressed with the details of the service in the last century so far as the part taken by cavalry officers in time of peace is concerned. I can only speak of what Marwitz says. We have already mentioned how rarely the older soldiers mounted their horses. The recruits rode every day. But how many were there of them? Twelve per squadron, or sixteen at the highest. It is certain that an officer was not always present. What did the officers do in those days?

S. There is no question that cavalry officers of the last century had nothing whatever to do with the interior service. That was a matter between the captain, the first sergeant, and the non-commissioned officers. The hard work of the lieutenant of the present cavalry, who in time of peace is busy from morning till night, was unknown then. In time of peace the officer was much more occupied with formalities and pleasure than now. Nor were his services necessary, for there were few recruits, many good riders, and experienced non-commissioned officers. The officer's activity was limited to formalities, squadron drill mounted and dismounted, breaking his own horses, and bodily exercise. This was practicable in view of the long term of service and the uninterrupted state of complete training of the troops, which on this account reached such a high state of efficiency.

H. At a distance everything looks much rosier; and what is separated from us by centuries appears to us more perfect than the present, because we do not see its weak points, nor get a close view of its worst features. Did you read what Marwitz adds to the appendix of his essay on the decline of the Prussian cavalry?

S. You mean the amusing story told by von Ahlimb of Frederick the Great's criticism of the "Yellows," the cuirassier regiment "Prince of Prussia"? Certainly. What do you infer from it?

H. That they also cooked with water in those days, and that the cavalry was not so perfect on all points as Frederick's cavalry appears to us now, in the light of glory shed over it by history.

S. But how harshly the King criticises a poorly trained regiment! "Slovenly, no accuracy, no order. The scoundrels sit their horses like tailors. You will have to do with me." Thus the King speaks to

officers! He speaks to them of "lazy bones," "shame," "being cashiered," and says: "I shall have my thumb on you; these things must change, or the devil will take you." It also appears from his speech that the pay of the furloughed men went into the captain's pocket, which fact we mentioned above, for the King says: "The captains only think of making money," and then describes in detail how all the men are furloughed. Do you believe that the King would have criticised the regiment so harshly unless other regiments had come up to his requirements? It also appears from the same speech how much he demanded from his cavalry officers. "Your service is such," he says, "that I must demand more of a lieutenant of cavalry than from a major of infantry." Nothing shows better than this severe lecture what a high standard the whole of the King's cavalry must have reached.

H. The horses, too, and their training?

S. Of that, another time.

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#### FOURTH CONVERSATION. (DECEMBER 20th, 1885.)

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### OF THE TRAINING OF THE HORSE IN THE TIME OF FREDERICK THE GREAT.

H. You were going to tell me to-day something of the training of the remounts in the past century.

S. It is rather difficult to give an exact description of the training of the remounts in the times of the Great King, because detailed accounts are lacking.

H. I did not anticipate any difficulty in the matter. Could we not gain our end by making inferences? A horse is always a horse, and the principles of the cavalry in different centuries, probably, did not differ essentially from each other. Xenophon's principles are to this day recognised by all true horsemen.

S. That is true enough! Only the means selected for reaching the correct result have varied considerably. On one hand, perhaps, the shortest and best means were not always selected; on the other hand, different breeds of horses require different treatment.

H. Were the mounts of the cavalry of the past century of inferior or superior breed to our own?

S. There is no doubt that we have a much better bred and more enduring horse than the cavalry had 130 years ago. But our horses also require greater care and better treatment.

H. Perhaps they are also more manageable and docile than formerly. Officers of the times of the Wars of Liberation told me that they used to have such vicious horses in the troop that they bucked off the saddle, slipped off the bridle, and attacked the men.

S. At the beginning of this century remounts for the army were still bought in the Ukraine. These horses had grown up wild and were caught with the lasso.

H. Then it was necessary to use force to compel obedience?

S. Yes. I remember that in the first years of my service we still had some horses whose stalls the men did not dare to enter for saddling, but put on the saddles from the adjoining stalls. It is a question in my mind whether the rough treatment did not add to the viciousness of the horses, and whether the present more gentle treatment would not have been more effective with those wild horses.

H. You mean that in the past century horses were more roughly treated than now?

S. I believe so, for the farther we go back, the rougher and more inhuman the method of breaking horses.

H. I heard that Seidler, the equerry of the school squadron in Berlin and Schwedt, frequently said: "If the beast won't bend, break his bones."

S. In the past century this was probably rather worse than better. The horses were not so valuable as now, nor so beautiful and well bred; and, because grown up wild, not naturally so much attached to man. Hence, they were treated more as things than as living beings, until training had rendered them fit for use. Whatever could not stand the training, perished. Altogether, there was less gentleness used in those days than now, as shown by the rod.

H. I also think that the conformation of the horses put greater difficulties in the way of training than now. At least, on looking at the pictures of horses of those days, with the large, clumsy quarters, thick head and neck, the deformed lower jaw and relatively weak forehead, one is surprised that such horses could have been used for riding purposes at all.

S. The pictures may not be accurate, it is true, but the fact that these figures are very frequent, and that there is not a horse shown in one of those old pictures which is well bred and well formed, according to our ideas, gives reason to suppose that these pictures give a correct representation of the breeds of that epoch. But at the same time we must not forget that many stallions, which are more susceptible of training and have stronger quarters, were ridden then.

H. What I am particularly anxious to know is your idea of the beginning of the training of the remounts. Was a separate remount squad formed, as now, in which the remounts were trained under the supervision of an instructor, or what was the *modus operandi*?

S. The formation of a separate remount squad under an instructor, in which one refractory horse makes the others restive, and in which they learn bad habits from each other, is a necessary evil with which we have to put up, because we have not a sufficient number of riders capable of breaking their horses by themselves. I have not read anything which would enable me to answer your question, but I suppose that, with the



large number of well-trained riders in those days, it was not deemed necessary to form separate remount squads.

H. And what do you think was the procedure then ?

S. I believe each remount was turned over to a skilled rider, who broke it by himself, or when the assistance of longe, whip, or pillars\* became necessary, with the help of one or two assistants.

H. Was there a sufficient number of suitable men ?

S. But one skilled rider was necessary for each horse. The other two men, when two were necessary, had to do what he ordered. If we take Marwitz's calculation, there were in his days seven well-trained riders in the company (half a squadron), barring the non-commissioned officers, and eight remounts. Hence, there was no difficulty in providing each remount with a skilled rider. The men to assist the rider were probably selected from the most gifted young riders, who were thus in turn instructed in breaking remounts. If but one or two remount riders were thus instructed each year, it was sufficient in view of the long term of service.

H. Thus one remount rider always taught the other empirically, without any defined theory.

S. I believe so, although the theories of riding were as firmly established then as they are with us, and more so; and adherence to the same was enforced by the superior officers in charge. In the period 1750-56 and in 1774, when the cavalry had reached the height of its efficiency, things were still more favourable. For the number of furloughed men was smaller, that of thoroughly trained riders larger.

H. We agreed that in those days the horses were more rudely treated than they are now. It is some comfort to me to know that you admit that ours, in comparison with former cavalry, shows progress in one point at least.

S. But you must not forget that in those days the quarters were much more powerful and put to more use. It was not necessary then, as it is now, to gather the horse so that he rested equally on fore and hind legs; but so that the quarters carried more weight than the forehead. It was necessary to use force, *i.e.*, whip and pillars.

H. In what way had the quarters to be used more than the forehead ?

S. Up to 1740 the charge as foragers was authorised by the regulations; individual riders caracoling before the enemy's front, firing at him, trying to evade his bullets by pirouetting, rearing and executing all kinds of artful mediæval manœuvres, which became obsolete only with the development of small-arm fire. Charles XII. had already demanded the charge of cavalry in solid line, but Frederick the Great was the first to fully succeed with it. The old system of horse breaking, however, was not everywhere abandoned at once; that would have been impossible,

\* Two upright timbers, between which refractory horses, with or without riders, were worked, or fastened, if necessary, to reduce them to obedience.—  
[TRANSLATOR.]

when all skilled and experienced riders had been trained in one particular system of horse breaking.

H. According to this the remounts were forcibly rendered fit for service in one year by the use of whip, longe, pillars, and Spanish riders.\* I should think that more than half of them must have been ruined.

S. You must consider that horses, captured wild, could stand more than those raised in studs, also that, when they came to the troop, they were one or two years older than now; and, furthermore, you must not think that the treatment was so rude that the horses were beaten to death at once. Much time was devoted to breaking the remounts, and they were handled with great care.

H. That is true. Marwitz says that the remounts were spared for three or four years, and therefore deducts at least twenty-four horses when calculating the number of horses fit for service.

S. The calculation of Marwitz is not quite correct. For he says that, after special reviews, enough men were furloughed to still allow the troop to turn out forty-eight strong. But if twenty-four are deducted from the sixty-six horses of the Gens d'Armes (exclusive of non-commissioned officers), the company could never turn out forty-eight strong except during the practice seasons, not to mention the special review and the great fall manœuvres, for which the company turned out stronger yet. I think that the remounts were treated as such for two full years, and that a few, or perhaps all, of the older contingent, were taken along to the great fall manœuvres, when it was necessary to turn out in the prescribed strength. For the special review everybody turned out; it was, however, not a hard day for the horses, for it was only the muster day, to ascertain whether everything on paper was there in fact.

H. When, after two years of training, the horses were considered fit for work in the troop, they became a component part of the troop and were perhaps not trained further.

S. On the contrary, the training did not stop. In spite of all the individual riding the training continued, especially in winter. Although it is not certain, yet we must suppose that the principles of the high school, which had been the standard up to 1740, were still adhered to later on. The horses were probably advanced in this school dependent upon available time and means, until the want of recruit horses and the further training as campaign horses put an end to all other training. For, as you may read in Varnhagen von Ense, riding across country was practised almost daily from 1741, especially during the pleasant season. You may also read in the *Comrade* (No. 41, October 10, 1885), that every rider of Seidlitz's body squadron, after riding his horse to water in the evening, took a few turns on the public square at Ohlau and took some obstacles at full speed. It was the constant aim to render the horse more suitable for individual riding, for riding across country. It was

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\* Free translation; also called "dumb jockey." An attachment to fasten over the saddle, the horse going on the longe without rider, to hold the reins in the same position as a rider would, were he able to keep a firm seat and steady hand on such a vicious horse.—[TRANSLATOR.]



sought by all kinds of exercises to develop the intelligence of the horses, that they might learn to overcome by themselves obstacles of the ground, to look out for themselves, so as not to require the aid of the rider by rein and thigh at every ditch or log to keep them from stumbling and falling.

H. You speak of the intelligence of the horse. Its stupidity is proverbial, and one might indeed believe it to be so on seeing at what objects such a horse sometimes shies.

S. The fact that the horse is considered a stupid animal has given rise to many faults in its training. Let me tell you, however, that the horse is one of the smartest animals there is, and some horses have more sense than many a man; but if you do your best to make the horse stupid, it must gradually become stupid.

H. But who would do such a thing?

S. Who? All of us. If we and all our ancestors, many generations back, had been tied up all our lives in a stable, isolated, each one perhaps in a box stall, and had only been taken out four or five times per week, to run around in a circle in a covered hall, I believe we would have less sense than the horses which are now considered stupid.

H. The low intellectual capacity possessed by the unfortunate Casper Hauser, when brought before the public, would seem to confirm your statement.

S. When such a stupefied horse does not learn to know objects, he must be afraid of those which appear suspicious to him. If he does not know a ditch or a gutter, he will jump short and fall in taking the ditch, while at some other time he will uselessly exert his powers by taking a gigantic leap over a small obstacle. If he has gone on the level school only, he will fail to notice the clod of earth lying in the stubble field and stumble over it.

H. That is the reason why thoroughbreds used to the race-course only fail to notice small obstacles and fall over them, and yet are passionately fond of taking large obstacles, but are utterly worthless for general riding. 1 R.A-

S. Certainly! But the ground on which cavalry acts is mostly of a rough kind, and for this reason horses that require smooth ground are unfit for campaign riding. The horses must be accustomed and trained to look at the ground themselves, and to step so that they will not stumble or fall even when going over hedge and ditch. In this they must be able to dispense with aid from the rider, whose business it is to look out for the enemy, and not for every furrow; who, so far as the horse is concerned, has only to take care that he maintains an easy, firm, steady seat, and does not allow himself to be hauled along by the reins, but feels the bit lightly so that he may know when the horse needs his aid.

H. But this school, which you also consider the foundation of all riding, prescribes how to gather the horse at the beginning, how to give him his head in the middle, and how to support him with the reins at the end of the jump.

S. That is true for rushers with school horses, and for leaping obstacles during such rushes. But any one attempting to get over the ground with that in campaign riding must fail, especially if he neither is a school rider nor rides a school horse; in that case he only irritates the horse during the leap by such aids.

H. I am glad you say so. I never was taught the high school systematically, but during my first lessons I was taught the aids of the high school for the purpose of jumping. I never could understand those three prescribed aids for our leap. I was invariably found fault with; at one time I had gathered the horse too soon, at another, too late; again, I had not given him his head sufficiently during the leap, or at the end of the leap supported the horse too late with the reins. It was only when another teacher, rejecting all these aids, showed me how to rouse the horse's attention by increased thigh pressure twenty-five or fifty paces before the leap, and drive him forward on the reins, leaving him, however, entirely alone during the leap, that I jumped correctly, and that my horse jumped readily.

S. That I willingly believe. The horse is not so stupid as to jump readily when during the jump he has been chucked in the mouth, and has reason to expect the same treatment again.

H. Now, if a school horse under a school rider is taken over a hurdle by other means than a campaign horse, I must ask whether two kinds of horses were kept in the troop, school horses and campaign horses, and whether the former were not taken out on to the terrain at all, or, when there, whether they were handled on different principles?

S. So far we have talked much of school and school riding, school horses and school riders. We should have defined school in the first place. A school horse is one which has been trained according to the principles of the school by a rider himself trained in the school, and one which moves in accordance with the principles of the high school. Many think that every horse used in the school for the purposes of instruction is a school horse, which is erroneous. At present there are but few school horses in Germany. In addition to a few such horses in the riding school at Hanover, you will find real school horses only in the "Spanish School" in Vienna. On the school horse the pupil learns the feeling experienced on a normally trained horse, and what mastery over a horse art gives. The school horse goes on his quarters, so to speak. The weight resting on the forehand of the horse in a normal state is removed by art, and transferred to the quarters. Resting on the haunches as it were, neck beautifully held in, with high action of the front legs, the school horse cannot stretch himself, but must trot and gallop almost on the spot, gaining as little ground as possible, and all this while feeling the reins lightly. The school step correctly executed is the triumph of the art. The horse which can take it correctly is capable of all school paces, and of the "high school."

H. This confirms me in the opinion that as long as school horses were trained in the squadron, they were probably never turned out for cross-country riding.

S. You must not think that the line of demarcation was so sharp; it was probably brought about gradually.

H. I am rather anxious to know how you reconcile these contradictions. Please tell me—for this is the principal point—are school horses fit for cavalry service?

S. The school horse is not equal to the demands now made on the campaign horse; his paces are too short. What Frederick the Great demanded from his cavalry after 1741 could probably be gotten out of the then school horses under their excellent riders (up to 1740 the tendency was to make every cavalry horse a school horse).

H. Allow me to interrupt you. You hereby admit that to-day we must make greater demands on cavalry than Frederick did after 1741.

S. We now require longer strides and rapid paces continued for a longer time; the increased range of firearms demands it.

H. Agreed. Now, if the present cavalry does not always come up entirely to the more exacting requirements of modern times, it does not follow that it would not have come up to the less exacting requirements of 1741, and that it is inferior to that of 1741.

S. Certainly not. And what do you want to prove by this?

H. That I was not wrong in extolling the achievements of our cavalry in 1870.

S. I never considered you were; I only meant that they can and must be increased.

H. Now, please go on and tell me how you think that school-riding was harmonised with campaign riding in the past century.

S. Frederick the Great found a cavalry which considered "the school" its supreme object. I told you before that "lançades" and "elevades," "caracoling," etc., were customary in battle. At Mollwitz the Prussian cavalry was defeated by the Austrian. Frederick the Great thence forward demanded from his cavalry long, vehement, closed charges, and he demanded them over all kinds of ground. You told me yourself how, in the camp of Kuttenberg, he drilled individual squadrons himself in order to illustrate what he wanted. The school horses had then probably to be broken of the short, high paces, and gotten in good wind by long paces. The short paces of the school were abolished; the horses had to learn how to stretch themselves. School paces with these horses were now out of the question; but the teachings of school riding produced *the implicit obedience* necessary for the sharp drill of those days.

H. You do not mean to say that after the First Silesian War school riding was entirely abandoned, and only campaign riding practised?

S. On the contrary! There still remained the same horsemen who had learned their ideas of riding and horse-breaking according to the principles of the high school. They began over and over again to break horses according to those principles, especially during the time spent in winter quarters between the seasons of active operations. Perhaps they also tried to again practise the high school with such old school horses as

remained from the last campaign, until they recognised that a school horse "stretched" to long paces in campaign riding ceased to be a school horse. Thus, under experienced riders, was campaign riding gradually developed from school riding in the time of the Great King, and in consequence of his demands on the cavalry.

H. When do you think this campaign riding of Frederick's cavalry reached its highest point of perfection?

S. In the year 1756, and again in 1774. The Seven Years' War made too many gaps in the ranks of instructors, riders, and horses; gaps which training in winter quarters could not fill completely.

H. Let us take 1774. Do you think that the high school was no longer practised then in Seidlitz's squadrons?

S. Considering what Varnhagen says, and what I just quoted from the *Comrade*; considering that the squadrons of those days were ever ready to form in the water of the Ohle at the signal of assembly, and every evening on returning from water took obstacles at full speed, I do not think it possible that these horses could still have been capable of the paces of the high school.

H. Now, if in the thirty-three years from 1741 to 1774 the high school was gradually displaced in the troop by rational campaign riding, how could the principles of the high school remain standard for the training of the horses? There could not have remained anyone who knew the high school. On the other hand, certain feats of Seidlitz's horsemanship seem to me possible only on horses trained in the high school. At least, I cannot understand how anyone on a campaign horse can leap, from a halt, over the railing of the bridge into the Spree. Please explain to me this apparent inconsistency.

S. The feats of horsemanship related of Seidlitz do not at all imply, by themselves, that he was a school rider. There have always been plenty of natural or campaign riders, and there always will be, who were, or are, so happily gifted that they learn and do everything by themselves and do not need the school. They are exceptional riders, who accomplish wonderful feats. Yet it does not enable them to teach, to impart their skill. They have the horses under complete control; obedience is implicit. We see this among tribes like the Cossacks, Bedouins, Indians, etc. The leap of Seidlitz over the railing of the bridge into the Spree is equalled, perhaps excelled, by the jump of a Mameluke in 1841 over the ramparts of the citadel of Cairo upon rocks thirty or forty ells below. He certainly knew nothing of the high school. Seidlitz's school riding is proved by his method of instruction. In his own regiment, riding must have reached a high degree of perfection. It became and remained a matter of pride, ambition, sport, or whatever you may call it, on the part of the officers, to be able to show off at least one of their horses each in the high school. In addition, there may still have remained some old riders—sergeant-majors, non-commissioned officers—from whom even the officers took lessons or to whom they gave their horses to train. Thus the high school, this crown of man's mastery over the horse, never died out. It was con-

tinued, at least among the instructors, and it was practicable each year to at least begin the first training of the remounts according to the principles of this noble art.

H. Then you think that when the horse was considered sufficiently trained, it was no longer practised in the high school, but simply exercised in campaign riding? How does that agree with Marwitz's statement? He states that not more than nine horses of the troop (half a squadron) could be well broken, and says especially, that seven men out of sixty-six, and nine horses out of seventy-five, were so completely trained that they were able to preserve and propagate the art on which the existence of this arm depends. Then he continues:—"All this noise (about good riding having been very general everywhere before 1806) came about in this way; that when somebody saw the best men on the best horses ride in the school during the so-called parade hours, he was surprised at their skill, and conceived the erroneous idea that the whole regiment rode the same way." I can draw but one conclusion: that it was the high school which was exhibited on those nine "perfectly broken" horses.

S. You forget entirely that Marwitz can speak only of the time in which the past century ended and ours began. At that time the decline of the cavalry was already considerable. I called your attention to this fact once before. In Marwitz's time the number of furloughed men and "Freiwächter" was, as you told me yourself, so great that the squadron could turn out as such only during the drill and manœuvre seasons. At other times, *i.e.*, from the end of May to the beginning of the fall, and from the end of September to the beginning of March, there were but few men present for duty, and, according to your calculation, besides two annual contingents of recruits and the officers' servants, only seven Gens d'Armes out of a total of sixty-six. The constant readiness for the fields of the whole squadron as demanded by Seidlitz, of course, ceased under these circumstances. The squadron could no longer, as related in the *Comrade*, assemble at any time in full strength on the public square at the trumpet signal. What was done with those nine men? Nothing at all, if the squadron commander was lazy; if he was zealous, he devoted the time to instruction in the art of riding. I cannot help thinking so. Any way, after years of peace, there is great temptation for the cavalry to mistake the means for the end, especially after the demise of those men who know war and know from experience how much must be demanded from the cavalry. Then it is easily forgotten that the art of riding is only a means toward the fulfilment of the duties of cavalry; and thus it is practised for its own sake, as the only object of cavalry. How much more must this have been the case when, during the greater part of the year, the squadron was so deficient in men as to preclude any exercise except that of riding. The "parade hours" and the nine school horses of the company of the regiment Gens d'Armes mentioned by Marwitz, if they were real school horses, appear to me as indicative of the decline of true campaign riding as practised in Seidlitz's time.

H. Was not the riding of Seidlitz's cavalry bound to suffer if there

had been no trained school horses in each squadron? I should think that with the opportunity of putting the recruit once in a while, during his course of instruction, on a school horse so well trained as described by you above, he must immediately perceive the effect of every thigh pressure and the lightest touch of the bridle, whether intentional or not, and learn how one should feel on horseback. I should think, that thus "practically feeling," he would learn things which it is hard to express in words, *i.e.*, more in a quarter-of-an-hour than could be explained to him in three hours.

S. He can learn the same thing on an easy-going, properly-broken campaign horse. You must remember that the campaign horses under Seidlitz were well broken. They did not practise the "high school," for they were not broken to it, nor did they go short paces with high action, but carried themselves evenly and went long paces. They were thoroughly obedient, completely broken, and responded to every application of thigh or rein. The means employed to this end in Seidlitz's squadrons, were quite different from those of Marwitz's. The latter figured on seven good riders out of a total of sixty-six men, *i.e.*, about one-tenth. In Seidlitz's time there were few furloughed men and "Freiwächter." If we take the furloughed men and the "Freiwächter" as one-tenth, and the recruits (for the men served as long as twenty years) as one-tenth at the most annually, and the men serving in their first and second years and treated as recruits as two-tenths, there still remained seven-tenths of the total number of men in the third to the twentieth year of service.

H. Then the squadron must have had 105 splendid riders.

S. If we suppose only one-half of them to possess special aptitude, there still remains over fifty riders who conducted the training of their own horses better than our oldest non-commissioned officers to-day. After selecting from them the remount riders there still remained a choice of riders capable of re-training a horse spoiled by an awkward recruit or other poor rider.

H. Please tell me how the horses were further trained after being ridden as remounts (let us say for two years).

S. If I am to tell you that, I can present you only a picture originating in my own imagination, for I never found any accurate account of the details of the interior service of that time. I can only draw inferences from the general features handed down to us, in connection with my knowledge of cavalry.

H. That does not make any difference. Let us draw inferences. The result will then perhaps not be historically true, but the picture will be one of historic probability, like the Egyptian novels of Ebers, which although not dealing with facts in every instance, yet give a vivid picture of a time which we have heretofore almost considered prehistoric.

S. Very well, let us try; but I expressly disclaim any absolute correctness for my statements.

H. The picture we shall thus receive we can again set before us later on, when we consider what methods would be the best to-day.

S. In the first place I take as my basis the fact that, under Seidlitz,



the squadron was always in condition to turn out for drill in war strength, winter as well as summer.

H. There must have been some minimum effective strength prescribed for this, for you counted two annual contingents of remounts—two-tenths of the effective, two annual contingents of recruits—two-tenths, and the furloughed men, “Freiwächter” and officers’ servants—one-tenth, *i.e.*, one-half of the squadron, which are to be deducted.

S. This calculation is only seemingly correct. I counted the annual contingent of recruits at one-tenth *as a maximum*, for the men served as long as twenty years. In taking the recruits as one-tenth, a certain loss by death and disability on the part of the older contingents is assumed. Furthermore, although the recruits were treated as such for two years, they had to drill with the troop at an early date, whenever the latter turned out as a whole, and were then “cuffed” into their proper places by the older men riding beside them. I think that the recruit was excused from squadron drill for six months at the most, which makes one-twentieth of the effective allowed for furloughed men, etc., one-tenth, or two-tenths counting the sick, etc. From the horses deduct two contingents of remounts and some horses for the recruits not yet able to ride with the troop; total, a little over two-tenths of the effective. Thus, with an organic strength of 150 men, the squadron could at any time turn out with 120 men and about 112 horses, and drill with “troops” of twelve files.

H. How were the horses and riders distributed?

S. I should think (at least I should have done so) that the best riders were put on the least trained horses, and that the best trained horses, after selecting the flank and non-commissioned officers’ horses, were given to the recruits. This division made, the squadron turned out that way for drill as well as for every mounted exercise.

H. You have assumed the remount riders to have turned out with the troop but not the remounts.

S. Of course the remount riders must thus have ridden two horses each day, and in the season when the squadron had to turn out in greater strength, so that the furloughed men had to be called in, remounts from the older contingents were probably turned out for drill in the number required. Guard duty also required many men, for it was carried on with both vigour and rigour, though perhaps during the season of squadron drill the guards were diminished and part of them turned out for drill.

H. Did the squadron ride and drill daily as thus arranged?

S. It turned out thus, but seldom drilled, perhaps once a week. Most of the time was devoted to increasing the command of the rider over the horse by means of individual riding, and fitting rider and horse for field service.

H. But did every rider have the same horse the whole year?

S. I should think so. After the squadron arrived at the place of exercise in regular formation, it broke ranks and was divided into



riding classes, which proceeded to go through their exercises. Assuming 112 horses, we take off twelve non-commissioned officers (instructors) and four trumpeters; of the remaining ninety-six riders the fifty best could be left to themselves almost entirely, because they were such excellent riders. They rode the horses not completely trained or those to be re-trained. The poorest riders, *i.e.*, the recruits and very poor riders of some length of service, about twenty-five, were put on the best horses and instructed separately and in detail. There still remained about twenty riders of medium proficiency (yet more proficient than our best privates in the third year of service) on well-trained horses, who perfected themselves in individual riding under instructors.

H. So much for the assignment of horses to the riders, of whom we may call the fifty riders just mentioned the "rough-riders" of the squadron. What did the rough-riders do with the horses which had undergone a two years' course of remount training? Did they not continue this training so as to bring them up to the more advanced requirements of equitation?

S. In a certain way the training was continued by the rough-riders, but not the way you mean; riding-school tricks, side paces, counterpaces, etc., which had been practised as a means to the end of making the horse pliant, supple, and obedient, were not kept up, except when re-training became necessary. The horses were practised (on the days when there was no squadron drill) principally in individual riding, the riders accustomed them more and more to the use of arms, developed their intelligence on all kinds of ground, including passage of fords and swimming, jumping hurdles and ditches; in short, they were practised in all those exercises which I told you before were taught the men. In this instance the horses were trained in these things by well-instructed men. The recruits, after mastering the elementary principles, and the remounts of the second and perhaps also of the first year, participated in these exercises slightly at first, more and more afterward. But in winter, when the young recruits and the remounts used the riding school, there must have been many days on which the older campaign horses only were exercised in these exercises by the older riders.

H. Were these older horses no longer exercised in the side paces of school riding proper? Not even for the purpose of brushing up, so they would not forget them?

S. What for? Why should they not forget them? As campaign horses they no longer needed them. To assume that the ordinary horse ought to go the side paces is to mistake their object; side paces are means to the end of making horses pliant, supple, and obedient; when the horse becomes so, when the object has been attained, there is no longer any necessity for the means. A pupil commits the rules of orthography and syntax to memory; when he has become an author and has continued to write works in unsurpassed, classic language up to his fiftieth year, he will surely no longer be able to recite these rules, which were indispensable to him at first in order to learn how to write correctly. Nor does he consider it necessary to repeat those rules; he uses and observes them without

thinking, because he observes them unconsciously. It is the same with a well-broken horse ; it is no longer necessary to exercise a campaign horse in the principles of the riding school.

H. I should think that their muscles and sinews would stiffen sooner, all the more as increasing age also contributes toward this. It is the same way with man ; I, at least, go through calisthenic exercises daily for the sake of my health, and in order not to become stiff.

S. But you would not need to do that if your vocation were such as to make you go through exercises daily which would keep your muscles and sinews supple and limber. Do you think that an acrobat or clown, who goes through the finest gymnastic exercises daily, continues to practise elementary exercises, by means of which his body was made supple when he was a child ? What gymnastics are to the acrobat, individual riding is to the older horse ; "tummeln" calls for so many turnings on the hind feet, individual combat for so many bendings in all directions of the horse's body, and jumping over large and small obstacles form so many useful exertions of muscles and sinews, that they need not be supplemented by elementary side paces to make the horse limber and supple. The only requisite is that the rider shall guide the horse properly, and not make him obstinate and hard by false aids.

H. But this requisite is, in my opinion, one not always complied with ; of the older riders referred to, there are, according to your calculation, more than twenty who are not perfect riders. They may, will, and must make errors, and thus teach the horses bad habits, making it necessary, I should think, to have them re-broken.

S. Here we touch upon another subject, that of re-breaking horses more or less spoiled by faulty riding. More recruit horses are probably thus spoiled, and were spoiled then, than horses ridden by older riders, although the recruits were put on the best broken horses.

H. It becomes absolutely necessary that the elementary exercises be resorted to, that the horse be again practised in the side paces, and I think that some school riding was necessary for the older horses in those days also.

S. For the older horses certainly, but only under riders who belong to the fifty called by us rough-riders. However well broken a recruit horse may be, yet it may happen that in the very beginning of the recruit period a horse here and there, under an awkward rider, acquires faulty habits, of which he must be broken. You can no more entrust with this the older rider who has produced these faulty habits than you can demand it of a recruit who has perhaps been riding four or eight weeks only. The re-training of a spoiled horse must be done by a rider more skilful than the one who spoiled the horse. Therefore, it was the duty of the rough-riders, as we called them, the more so as re-breaking is more difficult than breaking a horse, which is a well-known fact.

H. I cannot imagine that a horse, which proved unruly once under an older campaign rider, perhaps in individual riding, should have been immediately turned over to the trainers to be broken anew.

S. That is out of the question. When such a thing happened, it was, as it is now, the duty of the instructor to proffer his advice in order to show the rider how to overcome the horse's temporary bad behaviour. This teaches the older rider, better than anything else, how to put up with horses not thoroughly obedient, and it is the best training in the immediate use of newly-bought horses, which are more or less raw, as, for instance, horses supplied for additional men at a mobilisation or for replacing losses in war.

H. I think that with this class of riders the side paces were used sometimes.

S. Exceptionally, yes, for the purpose of re-breaking, but not as a continuance of the training; we ought, however, to guard strictly against allowing men to ride the side paces who fail to show the necessary aptitude and have no conception of the individuality of the horse.

H. Although a side pace may not immediately produce the best results, I should think it would do no harm, as it is more or less of a bending lesson, though incomplete for the horse.

S. That is a very common idea, which I oppose. I consider the incorrect riding of side paces absolutely injurious. It is better not to ride them at all than to do so with faulty aids and ideas. For instance, when in the "Shoulder in" the quarters "fling," *i.e.* (remain behind instead of being brought well under the horse), the horses get into the habit of pushing against the outer thigh, and resist when a short, quick turn on the hind feet is required. It is only when the quarters are properly brought under the body that the horse is able to raise his front legs properly. The "Shoulder in" is itself a lesson in the high school, the horse poising himself, so to speak, on the hind feet. The principal point of this lesson is unknown to many riders and instructors, hence the object is often misunderstood, to the detriment of the training. Faulty riding causes the quarters to remain behind, to fall away, instead of being brought well under and bent. In this manner the bending of the quarters is neglected, nor are the haunches and neck bent as is the object of the lesson. I assure you that, in the fifty years I have been mounted, I have become convinced that ten times more horses are ruined by faulty side paces than by accidents in riding across country. These accidents are diminished by a correct and moderate use of side paces as well as by rational exercise in terrain riding, and increased by faulty side paces and lack of exercise. It must be made a principle that none but the very best riders be allowed to ride side paces. That I believe was also observed in Seidlitz's time, and for this reason I believe that the re-breaking was mostly done by the rough-riders.

H. Did they have time enough for it? It must have happened that one man had to ride more than one horse. Did it not cause a lack of horses available for the other riders? Must it not have happened that a recruit or older rider, while his horse was being re-broken, became dismounted for some time, and thus got out of practice?

S. No! We figured on fifty rough-riders, *i.e.*, firm riders, thirty of whom, besides riding their own horses, broke the remounts of the first and

second contingents. This leaves twenty rough-riders to re-break here and there a spoiled recruit horse, or those of the twenty older but less proficient riders. To prevent the training of such a rider from being interrupted while his horse was being re-broken, he was perhaps given the horse of the rough-rider who was doing the re-breaking, for a few days. It is not supposed that in this short time he succeeded in spoiling this horse also.

H. And how during the drill seasons?

S. Then the re-breaking ceased, as well as during the great fall manœuvres.

H. How strong do you think the squadron turned out during the drill season and the fall manœuvres?

S. I should think that the remounts of the older contingent were turned out, *i.e.*, one tenth of the effective or fifteen per squadron; at the same time the furloughed men and "Freiwächter" were also probably called in, which we have counted as one-tenth of the effective, or fifteen per squadron. This probably gave an increase of two files, *i.e.*, a troop of fourteen files.

H. I should not think that furloughed men and "Freiwächter" were put upon the old remounts.

S. Hardly; they were probably put on the well-trained horses of those rough-riders who had ridden those remounts in addition to their own, and now kept them for drill.

H. In this way it was possible for the remount, other things being favourable, to remain fully three years in the charge of the same rough-rider?

S. Certainly; and I consider it a great advantage, as it fosters the love of the man for the horse.

H. There; we have produced an ideal picture of a squadron of the past century. Do you believe that all squadrons were so excellent then?

S. We set up ideals without ever coming up to them. In all man does, there are deficiencies and weak points. Some individual squadrons, however, closely approached the ideal; for instance, the body squadron of the regiment, whose chief Seidlitz was, and whose service he superintended personally. The result has been brought down to us by history.

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#### FIFTH CONVERSATION. (JANUARY 10th, 1886.)

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#### OF THE DECLINE OF THE PRUSSIAN CAVALRY.

H. It is a pity to see a cavalry of such excellence as that of the Great King go thus to ruin.

S. It certainly is. But it is instructive to inquire into the causes of the decline in order to learn how to meet a similar decline in the future, if within the power of man.

H. Already during the campaign of 1806 the Prussian cavalry no longer was what it had been under Frederick the Great. Whatever may

be said as to faulty organisation and leading in general, many regiments no longer came up to the very lowest standard required of a cavalry regiment.

S. Yet many accomplished as great things in 1806 as they had done in the campaigns of the last decade of the past century.

H. At the beginning of his work on the Prussian cavalry from 1806 to 1876, Kähler gives a condensed statement of the causes of the decline up to the year 1806. He says that already in the latter part of his life much that was injurious to the development of the arm escaped the notice of Frederick the Great, because his duties as monarch claimed his attention in so many directions. He refers to much that was useless, artificial, and trifling in the drill forms and evolutions. After the death of the Great King, he ascribes the decline principally to the absence of one common head, an inspector-general, to represent and promote the interests of the cavalry. In its organisation and consequent dispersion, two regiments being attached to each infantry division, he sees the cause of its lack of active participation in the battles of 1806.

S. I cannot entirely agree with my friend Kähler—whose early death is much to be deplored—in the necessity of an inspector-general of cavalry to prevent its decline or deterioration. Unless as, in the times of the Great King, the supreme War Lord himself sets forth the requirements cavalry must come up to, an inspector-general will not be of much use either. Unless the monarch adopts the views of the inspector-general, the interests of this branch of the service are not properly taken care of; if he adopts them, an inspector-general becomes unnecessary.

H. All due respect to the authority of a monarch. But you cannot demand that a monarch shall always be the best horseman in his country.

S. That is not at all necessary. Frederick the Great was not the best rider in his country any more than Napoleon I. On the contrary, there are sufficient particulars related of both to prove that riding was anything but their strong point. Nevertheless, as supreme commanders, they knew how much they must and could require of the cavalry. They followed up their demands with unyielding rigour, and that is the reason why the cavalry complied with them. The supreme commander establishes what is to be demanded of the branches of the service; the latter will govern themselves accordingly and come up to the requirements.

H. What we saw in our own artillery confirms your statement. The most important and far-reaching improvement, the introduction of rifle guns, was insisted on by our monarch, the protest of the inspector-general of artillery notwithstanding.

S. Kähler omitted to mention one essential cause of the decline. It was excessive economy that made the cavalry retrograde. If so many furloughed men and "Freiwächters" were left at home during the daily exercises that there remained but seven good riders per company, or fourteen per troop, as stated by Marwitz, then the great mass of cavalry could not have been equal to the most essential requirements. In the

course of a long peace the squadrons finally reach a stage where they consider the riding-school tricks of these seven or fourteen riders as the crown and ultimate object of their labours. They will, perhaps, even detest the drill and manœuvre season as one which spoils these tricks. Kaehler has mentioned these tricks, but has not mentioned the causes which brought them about. Untimely economy and niggardliness in the most essential requirements of an army in peace must undo all arms.

H. Would that all representatives of the people would bear this in mind when considering army appropriation bills!

S. Certainly, it is to be desired. And that they would realise that such untimely economy causes, in the end, greater sacrifices in money, and is rank extravagance! For an unsuccessful war costs ten times the money saved, not to mention the accompanying shame and misery.

H. When considering this and reading Marwitz's report, one is astonished that, at the end of the past century and in 1806, there still were regiments which made good their claims to the old-established glory of the Prussian cavalry.

S. That may be due to the fact that there were still some regimental commanders who had received their first instruction in Seidlitz's time, perhaps also a few who had served in the Seven Years' War. These men placed efficiency in the field above nice tricks learned in time of peace. Nor did they permit the abuses which went to fill the pockets of the troop commanders.

H. What abuses do you refer to? We have no reason to doubt the honesty of the then troop commanders.

S. Frederick the Great, in that sharp criticism related by Saldern, and to which you yourself called my attention recently, said: "The troop commanders think only of filling their pockets."

H. This is true. But this profit was sanctioned by law and regulations for the purpose of defraying expenses which their salary was insufficient to meet, but which custom of the service had saddled upon their private purses. Thus the pay of the men whom they furloughed in excess of the number authorised by the War Department went into their pockets.

S. It injures the efficiency of the troop for field service. When a regimental commander limited a number of furloughed men, more men remained in continuous service, and if he at the same time insisted upon having warlike training and riding continued, instead of devoting the major part of the work to riding tricks, then he kept the cavalry in a state of efficiency at least similar to that under Seidlitz.

H. Your opinion is confirmed by the fact that one regimental commander who had been out of service during the long years of the decline of the cavalry, imparted to his regiment a high degree of training and effective service in the wars from 1792 to 1795. I refer to Blücher.

S. This was the case with several other regiments in 1806. Besides



numerous distressing episodes testifying to the efficiency of individual squadrons, detailed narratives of 1806 and 1807 relate many a glorious deed. "They fought like heroes," says many a report.

H. But generally speaking, in 1806 the cavalry did not begin to accomplish what might have been expected from it, having in view the Great King and Seidlitz. Blücher himself expected more from it. In the battle of Auerstadt he complained to the King that, in his attempt to rally the retreating cavalry, the latter, instead of obeying orders, rode him down. The King replied: "They do not treat me any better, either."

S. The unfortunate organisation which dispersed the cavalry instead of keeping it together in large bodies, the advanced age of many commanders incapacitated for vigorous initiative by mental and bodily infirmities, may have contributed much toward the disaster; but the fact that the cavalry was capable of bolting to the rear so as to ride down the King and Blücher, proves that the major part had no command over their horses. I remind you of what I said of a cavalry capable of bolting at all, that the direction in which it bolted was entirely a matter of accident. This fact is the best proof of the decline of the cavalry, and particularly in riding efficiency of man and horse. This precludes the charge against the individuals of lack of proper spirit and courage, and hence I cannot contradict Clausewitz's opinion that in 1806 the Prussian cavalry still preserved the spirit of the Seidlitzes and Ziethens. For what is the unlucky horseman to do when his horse bolts blindly?

H. The few who had control over their horses, it seems, held out before the enemy, but were overwhelmed by superior numbers. At least one would suppose this to be the case if it was everywhere as it was where Ledeburg fought at Auerstadt.

S. And thus the cavalry lost its best men and horses first. What remained?

H. According to Hoepfner, and the work of the General Staff on the re-organisation of the army after the peace of Tilsit, and also according to Kaehler, of 255 field squadrons with 39,700 horses, there remained seventy-six squadrons with 8,120 horses, which seventy-six squadrons were poorly mounted, poorly equipped, part of the men only partially trained.

S. It makes one shudder to think that after a war of nine months' duration there should have remained but one-fifth of this imposing mass of cavalry.

H. Properly speaking, the number was still smaller; for the number of seventy-six squadrons is given as that of the cavalry after the re-organisation from 1807 to 1809. One would think that after the distressing experiences of 1806 and 1807 the remaining squadrons would certainly strain every nerve to restore their efficiency for field service. They must have ridden and been trained in a warlike manner from 1807 to 1812. Much can be accomplished in five years.

S. The work must certainly have been constant, for during the years of adversity the whole army worked assiduously in the certain expectation of being called out once more to fight for the existence of



Prussia and Germany. I know of individual regiments, as the Blücher Hussars and the Ziethen Hussars, that they rode and were trained during this time with industry and in accordance with the traditions handed down from Seidlitz's time. But were all regiments able to do this? Did they still have officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the old school? What was their formation?

H. Ledeburg says that in 1807 he formed a squadron of Kaehlers, Baireuth, Usedom and Württemberg Hussars, Irving Dragoons, Balliodz Cuirassiers, etc.

S. And they were certainly not the best riders; most of them were perhaps furloughed men and *Freiwächters*, since we have assumed that most of the best riders fell. How about the horses?

H. They were of course worse than the men. "Poorly mounted," Kaehler calls the cavalry of 1809, without, however, citing facts in support of his statement. But he must have come in possession of such facts from the official records accessible to him. The best idea of the distressing condition of the then cavalry we gain in the work on the re-organisation to which I referred above. In the beginning of January, 1811, in anticipation of a sudden attack by the French, it was intended to increase the cavalry. The squadrons were to be augmented to 125 horses, and there were to be six more men than horses in each squadron "to replace the sick." The regiments retained for the present, the condemned horses "for police duties," etc., "for training recruits." But this augmentation of the cavalry never took place. For the number of horses fell so low that it seemed necessary to form three squadrons to the regiment in order to keep up the efficiency of the former.

S. How is the instruction of an organisation in riding to be advanced if the recruits learn riding on condemned horses? Thus the incipient horseman does not learn how to ride, but merely how to cling to an animal broken down and weary of life. A fresh, gay cavalry spirit can be created and developed only on horses of fresh and lively paces.

H. The work further states that all the men without mounts were sent to the dépôts to break remounts.

S. An unfortunate measure! Do you believe that the squadrons, required as they were to be constantly ready and efficient for the field, dismounted their best men and sent them to the dépôts? However strict the orders may be, the troop commander will manage to keep the best men, if he must daily expect to take the field with what he has. How the remounts are trained at the dépôts we know from the last war. Remounts can be well trained only if the trainer takes a personal interest in each animal. Where is that interest to come from if the horse must be transferred as soon as it has received the most necessary training?

H. We did the same thing during the last war.

S. In war, the training of remounts in dépôts is a necessary evil; for troops facing the enemy cannot do the training.

H. The same reasons existed then. A sudden attack by the French was to be expected daily, and the state of things was more or less that of war.

S. That may be so. But it did not help the training of the horses. Were the recruits also instructed at the dépôts?

H. It would seem so; for the work says of the dépôts in which the remounts were broken that they corresponded to the drill dépôts of the regiments. Under the latter name, I suppose, are to be understood the dépôts for recruits.

S. Under these circumstances the cavalry cannot well have made much progress in three or four years.

H. Add to this the poor condition of the horses. I never saw any specific mention of it, but it is complained of in general. There were no breeding establishments in the country. The foundation for our present splendid condition of horse-flesh was laid only after the Wars of Liberation by Frederick William III. Hence, only such horses could be found in the country as were fit for the farmer's, not the cavalryman's use. The remounts had to be purchased abroad, but, owing to the enormous cost of the war and the contributions exacted, there was no money.

S. Then there was nothing left of course but to retain condemned horses with the troop. But if economy is necessary in the most essential things, troops cannot improve, as I have already stated.

H. I am not surprised that it was not only not possible in 1811 to increase the number of horses, but that it was under serious consideration to decrease the squadrons in each regiment to three.

S. Were there not other causes also which tended to diminish the number of horses?

H. It is not impossible! I read in Ledeburg's book (page 391) that one of his own horses was taken with farcy, and he tells quite naïvely that he had to sell it at a sacrifice. What would you think of an officer to-day who would sell, instead of kill, a horse infected with farcy?

S. There do not seem to have been any laws for the prevention of infectious diseases of stock.

H. This is merely a single case. But if an honourable man like Ledeburg tells such things, it proves that he had no idea of the mischief he might have caused; and if it was possible for such an efficient troop commander to be ignorant on this point, ideas quite different from those now in vogue must have prevailed in regard to the most dangerous epidemics among horses.

S. During and after a war these infectious diseases of horses prevail in a much more violent form than in peace. It is due to the impossibility of exercising proper control over everything.

H. Certainly. We saw that in 1866 and 1870. But the principles followed by those charged with the supervision should, at least, have been the correct ones.

S. Ledeburg's story is a conundrum to me. For old cavalrymen from the Wars of Liberation told me indignantly how widespread these diseases were among the French cavalry, how little attention the French paid to them, and how carefully they had to be guarded against in our cavalry.

H. The reduction to three squadrons from four in 1811 was not carried out in most of the regiments, "because the remounts became fit for use sooner than could have been expected."

S. I do not quite understand that. A horse here and there may become fit for use in a surprisingly short time, but all the remounts? There is a suspicion that the training was precipitate, to the detriment of the horses. However that may be, most regiments can hardly be presumed to have improved much in value in the years from 1807 to 1812, as concerns riding.

H. I think so too. The years 1807 and 1808 were spent in creating order, and most of the troops did not reach their proper garrisons before the end of 1808 or beginning of 1809 (the garrisons of Berlin and Potsdam not before the end of December, 1809). It was only in 1809 that the first instructions relative to training were issued, and in 1812 the major part of the cavalry again took the field.

S. If only the three years of 1809, 1810, and 1811 had been properly utilised, much might have been accomplished in that time.

H. It was some time before the higher authorities did get things into working order. In 1810 those charged with preparing a set of regulations could not agree because of the wide divergence of the views of Colonels Count Laroche-Aymon and von Borstell, and it was 1811 before a commission was appointed to prepare a set of regulations for the cavalry. In 1810 Borstell prepared "instructions," which, it seems, were observed for the time being. In these instructions the point most emphasised is the preservation of the horses. The condition of the horses and the difficulty of replacing them rendered it necessary. The work of the General Staff says: "It is remarkable, however, that this sacrifice, exacted by circumstances, was later on viewed as an improvement, and that there was no return to the old principles."

S. The seed thus sown was to bear bad fruit for many years to come. As late as the fourth and fifth decades of this century the horses of many regiments were brought out of the stable three or four times per week only, and the size of the horse's belly became the measure of criticism of the troop's condition.

H. I myself recollect hearing such views expressed here and there during my early services.

S. From all this it would seem that the improvement of the cavalry up to 1812 was not great, and depended entirely upon the individuality of regimental commanders; for some regiments formed praiseworthy exceptions.

H. After this, on the whole, superficial re-organisation, the cavalry took part in four campaigns. And what campaigns!

S. First the one of 1812, in which almost the whole army engaged in it was lost.

H. In the great catastrophe two Prussian cavalry regiments only were lost, which Napoleon had attached to the main army. In the North, old York took care to preserve the troops under his command.

S. Then followed immediately the campaigns of 1813 and 1814

without a break. It is not surprising that the last remnant of the old cavalrymen was destroyed, so that the cavalry could not accomplish much.

H. And yet history records splendid cavalry actions. Remember the deeds of Katzeler as the commander of the advanced guard of York's corps, the cavalry actions of Haynau, Mockern, Liebertwolkwitz, and Laon, not to mention other no less distinguished actions.

S. Do you count the destruction of Pacthod's and Amey's divisions at La Fère-Champenoise by cavalry alone on March 25th, 1814, among the less important cavalry actions?

H. I did not count it as one of our cavalry, because there the Russian cavalry did the greater part of the work. This achievement of the cavalry at La Fère, however, loses much of its splendour if it is considered that many charges of the cavalry were repulsed by the two divisions, and that it was artillery that finally broke them.

S. According to the reports of Prince Eugene of Würtemberg and his adjutant Helldorf, some of the charges succeeded before the appearance of the artillery, and after it the cavalry had to make many charges and overcome the French infantrymen singly. The dead and wounded were lying in heaps with sabre cuts on their heads. On the whole our cavalry during the Wars of Liberation did not come up to those expectations which, after the deeds of a Seidlitz, one is tempted to entertain.

H. Even in the most successful actions much remained to be desired in many particulars. Thus it is related that the commander of the "Leib" Cuirassier regiment at Haynau, before the command march, commanded: "First squadron half left, fourth squadron half right."

S. He meant to create such a dense throng that no rider could turn around, in order that when the general runaway, which he foresaw would begin, it would take place in the direction of the enemy.

H. An officer of this regiment who was in the charge also told me that afterwards everybody lost his head and no one knew what to do, because Dolffs had fallen. Other veterans have told me that in the winter campaign of 1813 the horses of many cavalry regiments were so run down that it was next to impossible to make them move faster than a walk on soft ground, and that charges were frequently limited to moving forward at a slow pace and crying "Hurrah!"

S. That was not the case with all the regiments, otherwise the success of La Fère on the 25th of March would have been impossible. Furthermore, the charge of the two Hussar regiments wearing the "skull and cross-bones" at Berryau Bac, on March 14th, 1814, proves that toward the end of the campaign there was still some cavalry that was in good wind. It was called "the long charge."

H. It is possible that the description of the inability of the cavalry to move had reference principally to the landwehr cavalry.

S. What would you expect the landwehr cavalry to accomplish, hastily formed as it was and poorly mounted?

H. Marwitz gives us an idea of it. During the armistice of 1813 he drilled his newly-formed landwehr cavalry regiment in the presence of the King, near Berlin. In both charges all four squadrons bolted and

ran square against the city wall. His majesty said: "It was a good thing that the wall stood so firm." Success in the face of the enemy could also only be gained by "bolting." The charge at Hagelsberg, described by Marwitz, gives an idea of it.

S. We have once before discussed the point that with cavalry at all capable of bolting, it is a matter of accident in what direction it bolts, and that it is therefore not exactly reliable. We must keep in view, however, that in 1813 in the majority of cases, line and landwehr cavalry were united in the same brigade, reliable with unreliable cavalry.

H. To this fact may be due the contradictory reports as to the efficiency of the cavalry in these campaigns. But it is not to be wondered at if, after three such severe campaigns as those of 1812, 1813, and 1814, there remained little material that was fit for use. While on a General Staff reconnaissance, General von Reyher once said: "In war, cavalry must be guarded like the apple of the eye, or it will melt like snow in the sun." And he, General Katzeler's General Staff officer, had experience in these matters.

S. Yes, it will melt if not properly trained in time of peace to overcome hardships without sustaining injury.

H. If it is considered how much good material in this melting process, in addition to the poor horses which soon break down anyway, is also lost by the enemy's bullets in battle, we may almost presume that, after the campaign of 1814, nothing was left of the old cavalry.

S. It is not to be supposed that after 1814 there was more than here and there an officer's horse that was trained according to the old methods. But this could have been rectified if the traditions handed down among the men could have been kept from dying out. It is not probable that after 1814 a single private of the old time was in line. Of non-commissioned officers there were probably very few that had seen service under the Great King. How about the officers?

H. Officers who had entered the service in 1792, *i.e.*, at a time when the decline of the cavalry had already become apparent, were, after 1814, brigade and regimental commanders, like Marwitz, Wrangle, Ledeburg, Sohr; some commanding generals, like Ziethen and Borstell; the captains and lieutenants of 1814 had almost all entered the service during the period of the greatest decline of the cavalry. Of the old school there was but one general left, and that was Blücher.

S. One man, no matter how great he may be, cannot, alone and unaided, create a good cavalry in a short time; and he died soon after the war. For this art, the development of which requires many years, is more than any other dependent upon transmission by means of personal action, supervision, and example, and cannot be produced, as by magic, from instructions, orders, or text-books.

H. Then we may presume that the Prussian cavalry, as it was in Seidlitz's time, was destroyed in 1814. Hence we ought not to speak so much of the decline of the cavalry as of its total destruction. This is the point on which I meant to come to an understanding with you to-day.

S. I cannot say you are wrong. What did the cavalry accomplish in 1815?

H. All detailed reports which we have of the battles of Ligny and Belle-Alliance agree in this, that the cavalry as a whole did not begin to satisfy even the most moderate demands. Charges were made resolutely. But we do not read of successes gained by compact charges. The performance of security and information service also left much to be desired. How frequently had Blücher's personal adjutant to leave the field-marshal for patrol duty, because the latter was without accurate information (diary of Count Nostitz).<sup>\*</sup> All cavalry charges at Ligny were unfavourable to us. Whole regiments missed the proper direction, although carefully instructed by von Nostitz, because they had been uncertain as to what was taking place in their immediate front. If we read Marwitz's diary of the time succeeding the battle of Belle-Alliance, especially of the 20th of June, we see that here a body of 3,000 horse missed the finest opportunity "for a brilliant coup" because of defective and incomplete training. Marwitz himself did not dare to carry out the simple movement of wheeling to the right by platoons and trotting past a village to the right, except by personally "preserving order in the column."

S. If at the moment of action the leader is to bother with the preservation of order among his troops, he cannot give that full attention to the leading of the whole, without which the use of the short-lived opportunities for cavalry action is not to be thought of.

H. Furthermore, what did the cavalry accomplish in the pursuit after the battle of Belle-Alliance? It is an historical fact that it was principally infantry drummers, advancing at the head of small groups of infantry, that repeatedly disturbed the rest of the French army and caused it to continue its flight. General von A., then a young cavalry lieutenant, told me that on the evening of the battle of Belle-Alliance, the cavalry to which he belonged remained a long time dismounted and inactive; that Blücher rode up furious, and, storming and raging, "got the cavalry on its legs," but it did not succeed in coming up with the enemy on that day. In 1815 Blücher also said in a general order: "To part of the cavalry no thanks are due." (Marwitz.)

S. No wonder if after 1815 everybody talked of the decline of the cavalry.

H. I only wonder that nobody said straight out and out, that cavalry proper no longer existed.

S. In 1816 Blücher asked for the opinion of a number of cavalry generals on this point. (Kaehler, "The Prussian Cavalry from 1806 to 1876.")

H. He himself considered it an established fact that during the preceding campaigns the Prussian cavalry did not accomplish what might have been properly expected. He concurs in Borstell's opinion, and only adds that he would prefer two or three inspector-generals of cavalry to a single commanding general of this arm, which he does not wish to

<sup>\*</sup> "Kriegsgeschichtliche Einzelschriften," published by the Prussian General Staff.



have separated by organisation from infantry. It was very interesting to me to read this view of Blücher in that particular book, because it is the only point on which I differed with my deceased friend Kaehler Pasha.

S. Borstell declares the spirit of the cavalry from 1813 to 1815 to have been above doubt. He ascribes its inefficiency to defective organisation and faulty use. In an organisation of larger regiments and squadrons (six squadrons with 175 horses each) he hoped to have a favourable means for the manifestation of force. He also criticises the fact that during the wars from 1813 to 1815 the cavalry had received no advice or instruction from the higher commanders. He wants closed charges, but little full gallop, much rallying, instructions as to the use of cavalry and its service in the field. He advocates the thorough training of the younger officers. He declares the landwehr cavalry unfit for most of the duties of this arm.

H. Among the generals whose reports Kaehler gives, Ziethen is the only one who calls attention to the defective individual training of man and horse, and points out the importance of laying more stress on it.

S. Please take notice that he asks for command of the rider over the horse, and not fine school riding.

H. In battle he wants the cavalry kept together in masses and held back until the moment for launching it has arrived. Then he wants a closed charge, the flanks covered by troops following in rear, and three lines following one another at 600 paces distance.

S. He revived some of the principles of Frederick the Great. But it is a pity he did not point out the necessity of daily work for the horses, and the getting of them into good wind, and the use of the cavalry in front of the army for reconnaissance. He also declares landwehr cavalry to be unfit, and wants squadrons of 200 horses, and one head to all the cavalry.

H. Thielemann does not go into details. He gained most of his experience in the French army, the cavalry of which, in spite of incompleteness of individual training and the defects of hasty, new formations, yet could show successes gained by the timely use of masses. He mostly speaks of the use of masses only, and one might infer from his remarks that he was more favourably disposed to the landwehr cavalry than Borstell and Ziethen. He wants squadrons of 160 horses.

S. Marwitz is the one that gives his idea most plainly.

H. He at least goes into all the details. His report does not seem to be due to Blücher's request for it, because it was written a year before in France, in August, 1815. He, too, states the cavalry to be entirely unequal to the duties of the arm. He describes how the poorly-broken horses under inexperienced riders became stiff in the campaign of 1814, and how the cavalry entered upon the campaign of 1815 on horses unfit for cavalry service, because none or but few remounts could be obtained during the short period of peace. He sarcastically describes a cavalryman who is a poor rider on a badly-broken horse as "an unfortunate being delivered over to the freaks of a brute without reason." He says that the art of riding had "nearly died out" in the cavalry, and



that in the whole army there was not one young officer who knew how to train a horseman from the beginning up. He criticises the loose formation of the line, the custom of observing and judging the charge from a flank instead of from the front, the slovenly riding, and places the Bavarian and Saxon cavalries far above the Prussian. It is true, he says, that there might be regiments which formed laudable exceptions, and counts those belonging to his brigade in 1815 among them. But he insists that what he said applied to the great mass of the cavalry. The landwehr cavalry he does not even mention. He calls for stronger regiments in order the better to raise and foster the *esprit de corps* by means of larger corps of officers, for better horses, the restoration of the art of riding, more rapid drill, and wants the mounted combat to be more of an individual combat "until we again can ride and move rapidly," *i.e.*, individual riding. He further demands the frequent combination of regiments of the same kind and proposes a number of amendments to the drill regulations.

S. I am surprised that not one of these old gentlemen bethought himself of the principles of the Great King of keeping the horses in good wind by daily exercise and hardening them to work.

H. It surprises me most on the part of Borstell, for, as Ledeburg tells us, he rendered good service with his cavalry in 1807, and should have learned to what enormous efforts cavalry must be equal in order to serve its purpose.

S. In the instructions drawn up by him in 1810, too much stress is laid in the first place upon sparing the horses during the exercises. What necessity then compelled him to say, he perhaps later on was loath to revoke, in order not to contradict himself.

H. It is possible and rational. We now have established the fact that after 1815 the celebrated Prussian cavalry had vanished almost completely. The next time let us investigate how it rose anew. And then you will concede that I was not wrong in admiring and praising the achievements of our cavalry of 1870, created, as it was, out of nothing, and which had become efficient in spite of fifty years of peace.

S. I told you once before that I cannot and will not call our cavalry of 1870 poor. But this does not preclude our utilising the experiences of the war of 1870 for perfecting our cavalry.

## [ 632 ] SIXTH CONVERSATION. (JANUARY 24TH, 1886.)

### RECONSTRUCTION OF THE CAVALRY AFTER 1815. RIDING INSTRUCTIONS AND RIDING INSPECTIONS.

H. To-day we will take for our subject everything that was done after the War of 1815 toward the restoration of the Prussian cavalry after its decline.

S. Rather call it "creation" than "restoration," for you rightly stated the last time that the Prussian cavalry was as good as wiped out.

There was, it is true, a body of troops styled "cavalry," but, with few exceptions, no horses equal to the requirements of campaign horses, nor horsemen capable of training them—the thread of tradition had been severed.

H. It seems queer that the authorities quoted by Kaehler, as Blücher, Borstell, Ziethen, Thielemann, failed entirely, or almost entirely, to mention this most important circumstance—that there were no foundations on which to erect the structure of what we call good cavalry.

S. It can be explained only by stating that these gentlemen had passed through many years of political and military turmoil, during which they paid more attention to the use of cavalry in masses than to instruction of the individual; therefore they speak more of the leading, of the unification of the cavalry under one head, of the number of successive lines with which cavalry is to charge, and if any one of them goes into details he does not go beyond touching upon the loose charges and the small number of combatants in a squadron or regiment, and calls for more and larger squadrons; but hardly one of them mentions the fact that the riders could not ride, and the horses were worthless.

H. Marwitz is the only one to assert that the cause of the evil was lack of proficiency in riding, as I stated the last time.

S. Marwitz, we found the last time, was not one of those called upon for an expression of opinion by Blücher, for his paper was written before Blücher's request.

H. His paper nevertheless seems to have attracted attention, for in the appendices he speaks of objections raised against it.

S. These very exceptions prove that he met with a rebuff, and it seems, not from the press, but from his superiors; for his essays were not printed until about the middle of the century.

H. May be; yet his Cassandra warnings attracted attention immediately after the Wars of Liberation, but I am unable to state whether they were his own or of others like him, now unknown to us.

S. What makes you think so?

H. Because the first steps taken by King Frederick William III. aimed, in the first place, toward laying anew the foundations of the cavalry service. They are four in number: 1st. The improvement of horse breeding in the country; 2nd. Preparation of riding instructions; 3rd. Issue of cavalry drill regulations; 4th. The formation of the squadron of instruction (*Lehr Eskadron*), our present riding school.

S. The improvement, or better, new creation of horse breeding in the country was one of the wisest steps, and could not help improving, and did essentially improve the breed. But its complete effect could make itself felt only after a long time. It needs no proof that several decades, nay, nearly half-a-century, must pass before the home-bred horses could furnish the annual supply of good remounts. To-day the German army requires an average of 10,000 remounts per annum. Nor could the squadron of instruction produce at once the great number of instructors required.

H. For a time they had to put up partly with an inferior domestic breed of horses, partly with purchases abroad (Poland and Ukraine) and a small number of instructors. Of more immediate effect were the riding instructions and drill regulations. I have always heard and believed that the riding instructions came out in 1816, Sohr being the author. Now I read in the "New Cavalry Sermons," to which you called my attention, that they were not issued until 1825.

S. Sohr is the author. I, too, believed them to have come into existence immediately after the War of 1815. Whether or not the statement of the "New Cavalry Sermons" is authentic, I do not know. May be that the riding instructions at first simply existed as a work by von Sohr and were not officially adopted until later. At any rate in the course of years they have not produced what it was intended they should and would.

H. Your statement surprises me. Did they not remain gospel for our cavalry during fifty years, even for our best and most prominent riders? When, finally, new instructions were to be prepared, did we not hesitate for a quarter of a century?

S. I do not and cannot have any desire to detract from Sohr's merits, and I acknowledge the many good points of the old riding instructions. Nor were their defects the cause why the work was not correctly done; the fault was in their application and interpretation.

H. In what particular?

S. Everything was treated from the infantryman's point of view, and instead of moving onward in harmony with the spirit of the riding instructions, they clung to the letter and rigidly adhered to the forms of them. As instructors and commanders advanced in age they were unwilling to vary from the regular routine, and the troops had to conform to their ideas.

H. Then Wrangel made his appearance in 1843 with his cavalry exercises, and brushed aside everyone who could not come up to his standard.

S. After that there was a clamour for a revision of the riding instructions. That the riding was not all that could be desired was not the fault of the old riding instructions, for their elasticity made good riding practicable. For that reason it was long before the new ones were finished, as it was difficult to improve on the old ones. It was about 1860 when the War Department decided to issue new riding instructions, but the difficulties in the way of producing something better proved so great that 1882 arrived before the three parts of the new riding instructions were issued.

H. That is my recollection, also. I became regimental commander in 1864. The old riding instructions had become so scarce that the number of existing copies was insufficient for the instructors. I applied for more copies. My request was denied, because the old edition was out of print, and a new one could not be printed since new instructions were to be published. It was only when it became clear that the new riding instructions could not be completed, that the first part of the old riding instructions was reprinted in 1866 and could be bought. The difficulties

in the way of producing something better prove the good quality of the old instructions.

S. Certainly! The riding instructions were based upon the principles of the art of riding and formed an excellent help for instructors, themselves good riders. But they were not properly applied. Later provisions impaired the elasticity of the instructions, their adaptability to different breeds of horses and kinds of riders. They contained some provisions which gave rise to incorrect interpretation in the hands of an instructor not imbued with the true cavalry spirit.

H. Please explain in detail.

S. In the first place, the rigid division of the course of instruction into periods was unfavourable to the further development of the cavalry.

H. This division is indispensable in view of the universal liability to military service and the limitation of service with the colours to three years. In the days of standing armies, recruited by voluntary enlistments, recruits might be trained as slowly or as quickly as was best suited to each individual. The same thing was feasible with the remounts, which were bought as required at all seasons of the year and trained each by itself. Now, however, a time must be fixed for placing recruits and remounts in the ranks in order to secure the strength prescribed for troops turning out for the great exercises after harvest.

S. This will generally be found necessary, but it would be sufficient to prescribe that the recruits must be ready for the ranks by spring and the old remounts by summer.

H. Should it be left to the discretion of every instructor to train recruits and remounts as he pleases?

S. Bless you, no! The course as laid down in the riding instructions is most excellent, and based upon correct principles. But the evil consists in the rigid division into periods for riding on the blanket, curb, saddle, etc. Some recruits are more apt than others and may be put on the saddle earlier; some remounts must be worked longer on the snaffle than others—must be broken to gallop, etc., later. In matters of adroitness of body, recruits and remounts are individuals, to be treated each according to his natural aptitude. It is, therefore, injudicious to put all recruits on the saddle on a fixed day; all remounts on the curb, after the riding inspections on blanket or snaffle, respectively, are over.

H. I should think that a prudent troop commander, after the riding inspection on the blanket, would continue backward recruits on the blanket, and work remounts whose natural conformation requires it, on the snaffle longer than others.

S. This rigid division into periods in turn makes the subsequent period too short. You said yourself, in your letters on cavalry, that the method of inspection influences the method of training, in which I concur with you. Accordingly, after the snaffle inspection, the remount is considered "finished on the snaffle," and cases can hardly fail to occur of horses being put to the curb irrationally and forced into a period of training for which they are not ripe, to the detriment of their training and their

sinews. I mention only the change from the snaffle to the curb, but the same holds good for every other part of the training.

H. It was left to the discretion of the inspector to direct the instructor to continue this or that remount or recruit for some time yet in a lower part of the course.

S. True! but you must not forget that the large number of experienced instructors and inspectors did not exist, at least in most of the regiments. The thread of tradition had been sundered, the troop commanders were still very young in years, and though many of them were firm riders, none had learned how to impart instruction; hence, the inspection was made, and after the inspection everything was advanced to the next higher course.

H. But I should think the inspection at the end of each period was indispensable.

S. Why?

H. Because, as you yourself just stated, the thread of tradition was cut, and the instructors themselves had not yet learned how to instruct. Besides, after 1815, the necessity for controlling the instructors had become apparent. Old veterans of those days have told me that after 1815 the troop officers considered it their duty only to lead their platoons in drill and battle, and that individual instruction was none of their care. From the time preceding these great warlike events they had heard it said that the interior service of the squadron was the business of the troop commander, first sergeant and quartermaster; the training of recruits and remounts that of the non-commissioned officers—that it was unbecoming their dignity, as it were, to attend to such matters.

S. Did the fidelity to duty, so well established in the army, fail when the functions of the officers were prescribed from above?

H. Fidelity to duty alone cannot overcome deep-rooted prejudices; it requires time. Long-continued war also produces stubbornness of character among the officers themselves. Just consider that they had gone through four years of war, preceded by six eventful years, two of which were also years of war.

S. It is true that long-continued war does not promote discipline in all grades of the army, however much else a short, brisk, lively war may tend to eliminate prejudices, and remove the rust which a long peace has deposited on the edge of the sword.

H. This went so far, I understand, that in a corps of officers a storm of indignation broke forth when it was ordered that the officers should supervise their own squads once in a while. They considered the order an insult to their profession, believing that something was required of them which was the proper function of the non-commissioned officers. Thus it became necessary to introduce the inspection as a means of ascertaining whether or not the orders given were being carried out.

S. The inspection and control were indispensable, it is true, and still remain so, for there are, and always will be, individuals with a leaning to indolence, who, flagging in zeal, infect others with their indolence unless

they are spurred on and corrected ; but the control can be exercised by the frequent presence of the troop commander, and over him by that of his superiors. The inspection must also take place, as an opportunity for proffering advice and instruction, in order that the young may learn from the old and experienced instructor how to impart instruction. In order to make it a success, to make timely corrections of wrong methods, it is better not to inspect on the days fixed at the end of each course of training, but to do so during the course.

H. Do you wholly deny the value of the inspection at the end of each course, as a receipt for so much energy expended and work done, as a means of rousing ambition and emulation between the several instructors ? The officer who has stood all winter in the cold riding school, who, with zeal and affection for every single remount, has directed its development, who with infinite patience has guided each individual remount rider by advice and example, likes to hear once a year at least, that he has done his duty well. Should he, however, hear no more of his efforts than the one who has troubled himself little about his squad, he will have no desire to go to the same trouble the next year. For the zealous officer this day is a need ; he does not like to miss it. He anticipates with joy the day on which he can show what his squad can do.

S. You see the evil consists in this very thing of "showing on the day of inspection what he can do." During the entire course of training the work is done with a view to this great inspection day. Not only is all that is in them taken out of the horses on this day, but they are previously trained, mistrained, "kniebelt" for the sole purpose of making a good show on this inspection day. There, on the snaffle inspection, some one puts the remounts through the "renvers" at a slow trot. If the superior say but one word in approval, some one else next year is going to work up volts and turn-about on two hoof-beats. During the entire course of training he has it on his mind, that he wants to show that on the last of January. He orders it and the horses are trained more dog-fashion than broken as horses, the figures laid down in the riding instructions are gone through, but how ? Flinging without properly carrying, without bringing the haunches well underneath. The consequences are, horses not in hand, broken-down sinews, torn mouths, obstinacy here, there and everywhere. The instructor does not care, if he has only "wound up" well ; for his usefulness as a cavalry officer is measured by this day.

H. You mention figures and paces which the riding instructions forbid to be used in closed squads.

S. It is only the new instructions that do so. The old ones do not prohibit it. Yet in spite of this prohibition we still have to combat a disposition toward such untimely tricks. And it is difficult ; for this sin is committed by our best and most zealous riders. It has its roots in the existence of this inspection day at the end of the course. It is utter nonsense to prescribe that a remount should by, say, the 31st January, have made a certain progress. A horse can be only so far advanced each day



as is possible according to the nature and the physical development of the horse under rational treatment.

H. Baucher says : *Plus vous allez lent, plus vous irez vite.*

S. A very sensible principle which neither rider nor riding instructor can follow, if on October 1st he has it on his mind that by January 31st he must have progressed so and so far. He is bound to precipitate matters to the detriment of the horse's later efficiency. Control, inspection, praise and censure, the stimulus of emulation, ambition and interest are necessary. The squadron formed as a whole must, after the completion of the training, have an opportunity on the inspection days to show what it can do. Only during the course of training there should be no inspections at the end of every separate part of the course. It is only when the troop commander is frequently present at the instruction and assists with his advice, when the regimental commander makes his inspections during the several parts of the course of training without previous warning, and suddenly, so as to witness the instruction of the different classes from beginning to end, that he can better judge of the course of training, improve and control, than by inspections at the end of each part of the riding course, and by praise and censure rouse an equal amount of ambition and emulation. He will thereby produce a rational course of training rather than artificial productions. This does not preclude that the periods of instruction as laid down in the riding instructions be generally, with some elasticity however, adhered to.

H. What you are saying there is convincing and correct in itself, still I believe that no blame can attach to the time immediately following the period of war, and the methods then instituted for not following the way indicated by you now ; for we must not forget that there were but few troop commanders who could teach the riding instructors how to impart instruction. In the artillery I know there were to be found battery commanders twenty-two and twenty-four years old ; in the cavalry the troop commanders were also very young and they had certainly never been riding instructors before. The regimental commanders in the preceding stormy time had become leaders in battle rather than moulders of cavalry. A system was sadly wanting, especially since the introduction of the three years' service ; there was nothing left but, with the riding instructions and orders in hand, to instruct and carry out to the letter everything printed therein.

S. I do not wish to blame anyone. I merely wish to state that wrong ways were followed ; I do not deny that no better ways were then available. Now if the majority were compelled to become riding instructors with the book in hand and from the book, it is not to be wondered at that the majority went astray ; for we agree in this, that from a book alone one cannot learn how to ride. The language is insufficient to express everything the rider ought to feel.

H. You are right there ; I have frequently heard hot arguments between experienced riders ; finally it turned out that both meant the same thing and that the only difference was in the mode of expression.



S. Therefore, it is necessary that theory, doctrine, study, always go hand in hand with practice properly supervised, with doctrine living in the practice, with living example.

H. In no arm were more drastic living examples to be found than in the artillery, where good riding instructors were of course much scarcer than in the cavalry; there were many officers, reputed good riders, who had taught themselves from books. I remember one who, when thrown from his horse, walked home to look up in Seidler what he ought to do in that special case.

S. That is an extreme and indicates the direction one may take in the absence of riding instructors who propagate the art by living tradition. You must not, therefore, consider it a stricture upon the riding instructions if I point out one more error into which one is apt to be led by following them to the letter.

H. What is it?

S. The old riding instructions divide the riders into three classes and direct that each class be trained according to the corresponding part of the riding instructions. The first class comprises the riders generally; the second is to furnish the riding instructors and remount riders; that the third class, to be composed of the most perfect riders, can be trained only at the "squadron of instruction," the old riding instructions do not expressly state, but mean to.

H. Have you any essential exceptions to take to this division into three classes?

S. Not to the division, but to its rigid combination with the text of the three parts; in the second part of the riding instructions the breaking and training of horses only is spoken of; there is no limitation whatever to what the second riding class is to practise.

H. Well, if the remount riders are to be selected from the second class, all riders of the second class must learn those exercises which are needed in the training of remounts?

S. That is just the great error into which they fell, which is still shared by the greater part of our cavalry, and which you are sharing, too. Why should a rider, who later on is to break horses, practice on a trained horse things which he has to teach an unbroken horse later on? He will be unable to judge of the sense and purpose of such exercises if he practice them on a broken horse, upon which they produce an effect quite different from that on an unbroken horse.

H. For the broken horse it forms a kind of repetition, anyway.

S. Why a repetition, when there is no need for it? I asked you once before, if an author rehearses the rules of grammar? Why should the instructor of the first class, who is selected from the riders of the second class, and found to lack aptitude for remount riding, learn exercises exclusively calculated for the breaking of horses?

H. In order to be able to make a broken horse still more pliant, supple, and obedient.

S. Now, that is just the general wrong idea! The man has no

apptitude for horse breaking, and is expected to make a broken horse more pliant, supple, and obedient. What is he going to do? Lacking understanding for the nature and way of reasoning of the horse, he will "kniebel," mistrain, maltreat it; he will impair its pace and carriage, *i.e.*, its efficiency; he will ride the paces prescribed in the second part of the riding instructions, but how? He will be bungling, not riding. Add to this, that the work is done with a view to the inspection. The troop commander seeks to have the second class as strong as possible; he strives, if possible, to show all riders in their third year as fit for the second class. Unusually awkward men only, troop tradesmen, and officers' batmen, perhaps, remain in the first class; all the others ride the most beautiful figures at the inspection—shoulder in-passage, half-passage, etc. If one squadron has so and so many riders of the second class, the other is asked with surprise to explain why it could not train an equal number of second class men. What is the result? The squadron commander proposes to himself, "So and so many men I must present in the second class." If he does not succeed in getting that number, he takes individuals that can never ride in that class at all, only to make up the number.

H. I like the expedient resorted to by many squadrons, of forming a middle class, from which here and there, during the course of instruction, men were transferred to the second class; the class thus formed they called "first class trained for second."

S. I read that in your letters on cavalry, and must confess was alarmed to hear you advocate it.

H. I submit to the greater experience of the specialist, but must ask you for your reasons, in detail, for this opinion.

S. You will concede that only a good normal seat enables the rider to give the aids laid down in the second part of the riding instructions for the training of horses.

H. All authorities are agreed on that; the latest work, "New Cavalry Sermons," also points it out.

S. Like every other book on cavalry! Yes, the seat! Not only the prescribed seat, as produced by verbal instruction at a halt, but that firm seat which has become second nature, which closely, yet gently, fits the horse's body, which is not disturbed by any of the horse's motions, and which permits the rider the free use of those limbs with which he has to give the aids, without change of position. From the hip to the knee the position of the body must invariably be the one prescribed, whether the rider bring the lower part of one thigh forward, the other back; whether the rider turn or bend the upper part of his body, whether he use his arms at pleasure. This is of great importance in the training of horses, in order that the centre of gravity of the rider shall always come to bear where it should. How long do you think it takes a rider to acquire that firmness of seat?

H. Certainly a long time.

S. I tell you there are many human structures which can never attain

to firmness of seat sufficiently to be able to give to a remount the proper aids under all circumstances.

H. Men of such unfavourable conformation of body should not be put into the cavalry.

S. In that case we would be unable to train the required number of horsemen. With very few exceptions, they can all acquire such firmness of seat as will enable them to use their arms on a trained horse, to become "cavalrymen," but to such an easy, natural, and yet firm seat, as is required for horse breaking, not all men are suited; and those suited again require long-continued and constantly-watched practice, unless like the boys at the breeding establishments, they are born on horseback as it were. If a man whose seat has not yet become firm, is to apply the aids laid down in the second part of the riding instructions, he will change his seat every time he gives an aid, either by thigh or rein. Thus, by changing the centre of gravity he unconsciously gives an involuntary aid. He hangs on to the reins. The obedient animal obeys this aid, and makes a motion which the rider, unaware of his own awkwardness, considers as refractory. The conflict begins and ends with "kniebeln," the horse becoming spoiled, restive, mistrained, etc. I cannot describe this better than the "New Cavalry Sermons" do.

H. How much time, according to your experience, is required for a rider of suitable conformation of body, to acquire such firmness of seat as will enable him to correctly use the aids laid down in the second part of the riding instructions.

S. Leaving out those "born on horseback" as it were, men of suitable conformation of body, under rational instruction and continuous riding on trained horses, by calisthenic exercises, riding in rough ground, use of arms, and everything pertaining to campaign riding, become in two years so proficient and firm in their seats that they can understand and use the aids given in the second part of the riding instructions, without detriment to the remounts; but understand, only under the constant guidance and supervision of skilled and experienced instructors.

H. Then you would take only men in their last year of service into the second riding class?

S. With the exception of some specially gifted riders, or those "born on horseback," yes; and not all of them, but only those specially suited. From among the four years' volunteers and those serving for promotion to non-commissioned officers, a selection would also have to be made, for one may be quite a good cavalryman and rider on well-broken horses, even instructor in the first riding class, without ever being capable of becoming a remount rider, a rough rider.

H. Do you not there come in conflict with the riding instructions, which prescribe the first part for the first; the second part for the second, and the third for the third riding class?

S. In the old riding instructions there is nothing of the kind. On the contrary, they say specifically that the first part of the instructions applies to all cavalrymen liable to three years of service, and that they form

the first riding class. Into the second class non-commissioned officers and such privates were to be transferred as possessed special aptitude. It is true the old riding instructions direct neither that all riders of the second class should ride everything contained in the second part on old horses, for this part treats of the training of the remounts, not of old horses; nor do they prescribe that the number in the second class should be as large as it was in fact.

H. The new riding instructions are very explicit.

S. Of the new riding instructions we will speak later. As to the use of the old ones, you will admit that it was nonsense and inconsistent to form a large second riding class, and make it ride on old horses all those exercises which are prescribed for the training of remounts. The old horses are already trained; hence, the rider is only taught aids and effects of aids, which are not suited to remounts, and are therefore wrong.

H. If you do not let any of the riders in their second year of service, and belonging to the second riding class, ride all those exercises on old horses which they need in riding remounts, you cannot firmly train riders in their second year of service so as to make them remount riders in the third year.

S. But why should I? When, after a two years' course of riding the gifted riders have been selected, they are put on the remounts and taught the aids on them.

H. Thus you fail to train any rider among the men who can break remounts by himself.

S. With a term of service of three years, this is altogether out of the question, for, properly speaking, a rider can never cease to learn, though he ride for fifty years. We can only expect of some few non-commissioned officers of long service that they become independent rough riders. The pillars of cavalry to-day can be only those officers who see in this art a part of their life vocation.

H. Is not the art of riding thus lost in the grades of non-commissioned officers and privates?

S. No! on the contrary. The foundation of the art of riding—the seat—is confirmed only by adhering to this principle. It is only the finer, higher degree of the art, which all those must forego who do not cultivate it long enough to become capable of acquiring it.

H. We are straying from our subject of to-day, the development of the cavalry after the War of 1815.

S. Thus ardour carries us away into the details of the art. Another consequence of the subsequent erroneous ideas was the spreading desire opposed to the spirit of cavalry, of reducing everything to a scheme.

H. I became aware of it myself at the beginning of my service without perceiving, however, that it had anything to do with the development of the principles and the errors referred to by you.

S. What I told you with reference to "working for the riding inspections" led, in the absence of regulations prescribing much and continuous individual riding, to the following results: In all riding classes an effort

was made to have at the ends of the several riding courses, the classes with distances of two horses' lengths perform some quite pretty and artificial productions selected from the second part of the riding instructions. There were some recruit classes that rode side paces and received official praise for it. But nowhere were these performances the result of a thorough training according to the rules of the art of riding, but more or less the result of a training similar to that of trained dogs. Without proper carriage when in motion, without carrying themselves evenly, the horses did what was required of them. They did not step the side paces, but fell sideward. In spite of faulty aids they went the prescribed figures, but under constraint and pain. This constraint and pain they could stand only the three-fourths of an hour prescribed for school riding. As soon as they were freed from the yoke and left the school, Nature asserted herself. She opposed the constraint. She freed herself from it. It then became manifest that it had been erroneous to think that they had the carriage. It became plain that they had never even acquired the carriage, the balance.

H. You are right. When school riding was over the horses were at first unmanageable in the open.

S. Some held back and became restive; others to rid themselves of the pain, bolted; nearly all lost the extended pace, if they ever possessed it. Hence, the rider had to be given time to quiet his horse. He allowed his horse relaxation from the supposed "carriage," and then the good-natured animal submitted to the drill forms, more from habit, however, than obedience to the rider.

H. Yet the drill was eventually carried on with correctness.

S. Yes, on the level drill ground, not on the terrain. And how many horses stuck, how many ran away in the charge! I must again remind you of the time when there were but few horses in each squadron that could be used for patrol duty. The lack of proper carriage on the part of the horse became especially apparent whenever during the drill season an attempt was made to have the classes ride in the school as they had done during the winter.

H. That I should think would have exposed the error.

S. It did not, for subordination compelled adherence to the riding instructions and orders on the subject. On the contrary, ideas spread that drill, the manœuvre, the use of the horse generally, was detrimental to riding, as ruining the horse's carriage. A disposition to see in school riding the highest aim of cavalry, gained more and more ground. Far less value was attached to efficiency on the terrain, in drill and manœuvre than to school riding, which was considered the art of riding. Instead of the means to an end, it became the end itself.

H. I remember very well how our highest superiors used to assemble for snaffle inspection, and "stuck it out" with creditable perseverance.

S. They knew that snaffle work was the most important. But this snaffle inspection was an evil. Another evil consequence was this: At the beginning of the drill the troop commander was apprehensive lest the

horses should lose their carriage. There was no beginning with lively gaits; the jog trot was used for a long time, to the prejudice of lively paces, to the detriment of the front legs, to the *ennui* of the riders. As a charge would completely disorder the troop, it was carefully avoided. The drill was conducted with more and more uneasiness and diffidence, and when a squadron once had to pass a ditch, it was no small undertaking.

H. Many such things I saw myself. I remember that a regiment on the drill ground trotting up in column of squadrons (right in front) had to come down to a walk in order to change direction to the left because the wheel at a trot might have thrown it into disorder; and this happened at the inspection at the end of the drill season. Forty years ago many a regiment received well-merited censure for its inability to take a ditch in the manœuvres.

S. Can the school of such a regiment produce a Seidlitz? But listen: The more the use of cavalry was considered an evil, tending to alienate cavalry from its supposed object—school riding—the more was the attention of all superiors directed to school riding, as the one essential thing. The higher the superior interested in this direction, the more he demanded uniformity from all the regiments under his command. It brought out orders as to formalities to be observed in school riding and at the inspection, wholly foreign to the subject—such orders as those mentioned in your letters, for instance, that in order not to prove a failure, line must be formed after inspection the same as before inspection.

H. I might tell you some worse things, and mention organisations where the commands were written on a separate sheet in the rotation in which they were to be given—a sheet which we youngsters used to call “the ‘menu.’” Woe to the instructor who commanded an “about” earlier than laid down in the “menu.”

S. Little attention must have been paid to the execution.

H. Hardly any attention was paid to the manner of execution, the carriage of the horses.

S. Thus arose a pedantry, disgusting instructor and pupil alike with the instruction, because precluding spontaneous action and thought. When riding is moulded into forms, a certain stiffness of seat unsuited to the art of riding cannot help resulting therefrom.

H. What I mentioned above, I saw not in a cavalry regiment, but in the artillery

S. The latter, owing to still greater lack of trained instructors, became more deeply entangled in errors. One thing more: A horse which is broken in a rational manner and with confidence in its rider, and under constant consideration of its nature and capabilities, and without being refractory, which is so trained that it becomes active gradually and in harmony with its physical capability and development, gains in beauty, health and strength. With ample exercise it remains fresh, likes to eat, and gains in muscle. A horse from which more is demanded than it can do, *i.e.*, whose training is hastened too much, or which is given false aids by an awkward rider, suffers pain. It does not feed well, digests



poorly and loses strength. If a conflict has taken place, if the horse has become thoroughly heated and out of breath, it refuses food altogether, and appears next day for the exercise in an irritated, morbid condition. With the system of inspections at the end of each riding period, undue haste in training and frequent conflicts could not be avoided. Still more conflicts arise when incompletely trained riders are required to ride paces for which they lack as yet proper understanding and use wrong aids. A horse which is being ridden faultily comes in conflict with its rider, and goes only when forced by pain, is fatigued more in three-fourths of an hour than another in three or four hours which is treated rationally and remains in harmony with its rider. The latter horse may tire, but it gets hungry, feeds well and lies down on the bedding in the stable. The former becomes irritated, looks shyly around the stable, does not eat on account of nervousness, nor lie down at night. Thus the horses become poor and wretched. This was attributed to too much work in comparison with the food. They were ridden less frequently and for a shorter time. To allow them to recover, they were left in the stable sometimes more than once a week.

H. I used to know battery commanders who would not take a horse out more than four times a week.

S. Thick bellies were thus produced but not muscle. The fat overlying the muscle was mistaken for muscle. Much stress was laid on the condition of horses as to flesh. In disregard of the principles of Frederick the Great, requiring at least two hours of daily exercise for each horse, the horses were fattened instead of being kept in effective, good condition.

H. Such horses were certainly unequal to long-continued drill evolutions.

S. They were not even up to the small requirements then demanded from cavalry. With charges over 800 paces altogether (including walk, trot, gallop and full speed) with slow and circumspect drilling, horses which had accumulated fat on their lungs, were so run down that after every drill season they needed a spell of recuperation, only to again lay on fat. Thus, after the spring drills, from the beginning of June to the middle of July; thus, after the summer exercises and manoeuvres from the middle of July to the beginning of November.

H. It is not to be wondered at that with such material, exertions as now put forth by every regiment like so much child's-play could not then be risked when every cavalry leader was under constant apprehension lest he should require too much of his troops.

S. And when I again recur to that fact, no Seidlitzes were produced. This apprehension at the same time created a custom of making long marches at a walk only, then on account of a long time spent in the saddle on the march, taking a long rest dismounted before drill, and of remaining halted at ease a long time during drill. Long-continued walking and halting killed the rider's spirit and delight, and suppressed spontaneous action. At the same time the horses were more and more weakened.

H. Wrangel's cavalry exercises in 1843 struck these practices like a cyclone.

S. Like a purifying thunderstorm. Wrangel marked a new epoch for the cavalry. The year 1843 may be designated as the one in which the evils mentioned had reached their highest point. But before we speak of Wrangel's influence, we must turn to the effect of the squadron of instruction—the drill regulations and improvements in horse breeding.

H. That we will discuss the next time.

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#### SEVENTH CONVERSATION. (FEBRUARY 7TH, 1886.)

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### THE SQUADRON OF INSTRUCTION, DRILL REGULATIONS, SPORT AND PROFESSIONAL EQUESTRIANISM.

H. The formation of a squadron of instruction plainly shows that the lack of a sufficient number of riding instructors was properly appreciated in high circles, since it was intended to train the requisite number of them in this squadron of instruction.

S. Certainly! Speaking of the period from 1815 to 1843, I have no personal knowledge of the doings of the then squadron of instruction, and am not in a position to judge whether or not the proper methods were followed.

H. If we be permitted to judge by results, the answer is in the negative, for up to 1843 no progress in campaign riding was made in the army.

S. Whether that was the fault of the squadron of instruction, cannot be decided now. The squadron of instruction was attended by lieutenants and non-commissioned officers. They could not introduce into the army any change of system. From the squadron of instruction they returned to the troop, and had to instruct as told by their superiors. These latter did not take instructions from them; wherever, therefore, the superiors in the cavalry differed in their opinion from the graduates of the squadron of instruction, the teachings of that school could not be put into practice all at once.

H. According to that, such an institution would be altogether useless, for the regimental and troop commanders cannot be sent to the squadron of instruction.

S. The effect of such an institution can become appreciable only when the graduate has come into command himself, *i.e.*, when he is a troop commander. We must remember how terribly slow promotion was in those days.

H. That is true. In 1838 or 1839 three second lieutenants in one of the dragoon regiments celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of their service in that grade.

S. Hence, it is not to be wondered at if an officer who graduated in 1820 from the squadron of instruction, did not have an opportunity to

direct, as troop commander, the instruction according to the system he had been taught.

H. It seems to me that the method adopted was not the best, most appropriate.

S. What makes you think so?

H. Several things. It happened in my time that some officer's charger was sent back to the regiment from the riding school or squadron of instruction as not suited, with the request that another be sent in its place. It was stated that the horse was suitable for service with the troop but too weak for the school. Unsophisticated layman as I was, I thought that that school could not be suited to the service, for if the officers do not learn there how to make suitable service horses active, the cavalry derives little benefit from their training at the institution.

S. Your conclusion is correct. In those days when there was a general tendency to make the performances on the riding track the principal object, I should not be surprised if it was attempted to make a school horse of every horse in the squadron of instruction.

H. I also recollect a saying, very common in those days, that the officer who graduated from the squadron of instruction must forget what he had learned before he was again fit for service with the troop. During the period subsequent to their graduation, they were never seen riding except at a short trot in the circle.

S. That can only have been due to the same cause.

H. Furthermore, the non-commissioned officers who came from the institution, were, as a rule, too hard on the remounts in the beginning, or broke them down, until they had again become familiar with the slower method of training pursued in the troop.

S. It is much to be deplored that those in attendance at the institution do not sufficiently learn from the beginning how to break the young remounts. The officers bring their own horses, which, however young they may be, are at least one year older than the horses that come to the troop as young remounts. The pupil does not, therefore, learn by practice how the horse should be trained from the beginning. He receives his instruction on horses already partially trained, strong and developed. When called upon to show what he can do, and to instruct a remount squad, he wants to get results too quickly, advances too fast, lacks thoroughness, fails to spare the young animals as he should, and ruins them.

H. This is more the case with the non-commissioned officers, who are more rude in the use of aids and not sufficiently educated to fully comprehend the instruction at the institution. I have hardly ever seen a troop really benefitted by sending a non-commissioned officer to the institution.

S. If for no other reason than that they never have an opportunity of directing the instruction because they never become troop commanders, I would prefer myself not to send non-commissioned officers to the institution as pupils, and rather use the money for training more officers there. I understand that it is contemplated, in official circles, to discontinue the sending of non-commissioned officers as pupils to the in-

H. Was the system taught in the squadron of instruction the correct one?

S. As I said before, I cannot give an opinion. I should think, however, that in 1815 there still remained a sufficient number of old riders to furnish the requisite number of competent riding instructors for the squadron of instruction, revive the traditions of the correct system and diffuse them. We know of one who was a great authority—equerry Seidler.

H. He is the man I was thinking of. He certainly was a most excellent rider. His work was accepted as an authority. I cannot venture to give an unqualified opinion of him. I saw him myself in 1853, but did not know him well enough to give an opinion of my own. But I received my first instruction in riding from one of his pupils, and heard officers who had come from the squadron of instruction speak of him a good deal.

S. What did they find in him to criticise?

H. My first instructor in riding used much brutality toward the horses. Not infrequently he stood in the middle of the track and commanded: "Both spurs throughout the squad!" "And again!" "And once more for me!"

S. Seidler would hardly have approved of this, for such treatment is apt to ruin three months' work.

H. What was told me of Seidler himself would indicate that he also used force. "If the beast won't bend, break his bones!" This expression, which I mentioned above, was familiar in those days as one of his. He is said to have worked the horses very hard and broken down many which, with greater care, would have become good campaign horses.

S. It can only have been due to the fact that old Seidler himself received his first practical lessons in riding on that old, inferior material which needed the application of force and spur, and could not adapt himself, in his old age, to the treatment of a higher breed of horses. Confined as he was to the limits of the riding track, he may have lost sight of the needs of campaign riding—the more since in those days school riding became the principal object of cavalry. He may have endeavoured to make every horse a school horse, and ruined all those not strong enough for it.

H. Another reason, perhaps, why the squadron of instruction did not fulfil all expectations, was the fact that the number of officers instructed at one time was not sufficient.

S. And that the squadron was garrisoned at Berlin, where too much amusement detracted the pupils from the toilsome course of instruction. This point was taken into consideration about the middle of the century, and the squadron transferred to Schwedt.

H. We cannot, generally speaking, criticise an institution, whether we call it a squadron of instruction or riding school, for making riding its primary object. It is created for the purpose of imparting instruction in riding. The temptation to bring the art of riding to the highest perfection

is but natural. Under these circumstances it is pardonable if the instructor forgets that campaign riding is the principal object, and the art of riding only a means to the end. He practises his own line of the profession and wants to show what he can do. In order to constantly keep before his mind the object for which the art of riding is practised, there should be some categorical, imperative orders from high authority to correct him and define the limits within which the art of riding is to be practised as such, with the future instructors now under his instruction.

S. This correction should come through the cavalry drill regulations.

H. Did not the regulations of 1812 accomplish this?

S. I cannot answer this question with an unqualified Yes. The regulations of 1812 contain too many movements borrowed from the infantry, and which, for correct execution, require much time and fatiguing and useless exercises. I say useless, because they cannot possibly be required in battle and, by keeping the masses in motion without gaining ground, kill the real cavalry spirit; I mean that spirit which finds its element in the rapid forward movement. Still the regulations might have passed, had more value been attached to what really pertained to the cavalry, and had such matters in the regulations as really pertained to the infantry found secondary consideration only. But the contrary was the case in the application of these regulations.

H. It needs only a reading of the directions published for the cavalry exercises near Berlin in 1821, to show that you are right. I read them in Kaehler's work on the Prussian cavalry from 1806 to 1876 (Berlin, 1879, Mittler). When we read (page 33, subject No. 11) that a body of six brigades of cavalry or twelve regiments, or forty-eight squadrons made a wheel in line at a walk, I fail to see when such a movement could ever be required in war and, if a change of front were necessary, how it could be made in time in this manner.

S. The same is to be said of the wheel of this large body of cavalry to the left rear with a change of front of ninety degrees.

H. What I cannot understand is, that these movements were prescribed by the same Borstell who, if we believe the diary of General von Ledebur, proved such a fine cavalry leader in 1807.

S. It is difficult to solve this psychological problem. It is easy to say that he was now fourteen years older. But when we read the notes which he wrote twenty years later, for the preparation of instructions for the formation and use of large bodies of cavalry (Kaehler, page 62, *et seq.*), we recognise that during the last years of his life he still adhered to the correct cavalry principles. However that may be, up to 1843 the regulation drill of our cavalry became more and more pedantic and slow. The charge of 800 paces including walk, trot and gallop, was too short. The effectiveness of the charge was judged from the flank by the alignment, instead of by the vehemence of the shock, and from in front by the compactness, as was done by the Great King. The correct execution of ployments and deployments without gaining ground forward was placed above sharp riding. Movements of large, closed bodies, over miles of ground at a

rapid pace were never executed. The leader was judged by the size of the horses' bellies rather than their efficiency as campaign horses.

H. When we take all this into consideration, it is not to be wondered at if the fresh, brisk, cavalry spirit, was impaired.

S. Add to this the fact that promotion was so horribly slow as to be practically at a standstill. As second lieutenants celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of their commissions, so regimental and troop commanders remained in the same grade for nearly a quarter of a century. These gentlemen became settled in their posts and gave themselves up to personal comfort. Meritorious services performed during the glorious Wars of Liberation caused them to be judged with forbearance during the long peace. The very possibility of a war began to be disbelieved. The demands on cavalry in war were forgotten, and it was preferred to move cavalry slowly in order to preserve a splendid appearance.

H. And yet the improvements in breeding produced a class of horses which became nobler and more perfect every year, and capable of greater efforts than formerly.

S. That was unknown then, because the efficiency was never brought out by tests. The material worked itself into shape but in a different way.

H. According to this the horses taught us how to ride properly.

S. It sounds paradoxical when stated so tersely; and yet there is a grain of truth in it. As a well trained horse trains a rider, so the existence of a good breed of horses must influence the rider-spirit in a country. The mutual relations between rider and horse exist in large bodies as well as in individuals.

H. In what way did the improvements in horse breeding tend toward good riding?

S. By a circuitous way—through sport. The government improved and encouraged horse breeding in the country in every way. Private studs were thus improved. The society for horse breeding and horse training came into existence. Races were arranged after the manner of the English. On the race track the value of the breed was put to the test. The different studs competed there. The government encouraged the races by offering prizes; the reigning families, by their presence on the course.

H. I have never considered the winners on the race track as good campaign horses.

S. No more than jockeys as good campaign riders. But it is to be observed how many horses a stud must raise before it can register one winner on the race track. Most of the horses bred are not taken into training at all.

H. Thus the owners of the studs raise most of the horses to no purpose, and pay with enormous sacrifices in money for the vanity of seeing their studs once credited with a winner.

S. It is not vanity alone that makes the breeder try to produce a winner. If he is so very fortunate as to produce a winner, it brings him much money. It helps him over many a year of loss, as a good vintage



does a wine grower. In 1865 Gladiateur brought in 1,046,142 francs, without counting the bets. Nor are all the other horses which must be raised, raised to no purpose, though they be not suitable for the race-course. The country gets the benefit, for those not suitable for training, as well as the racers that fail to win, are sold into the country and improve the stock down to the farm horse. The farmer who got but one foal from his mare, eventually found out that he got a more efficient animal by crossing the blood of his weak animal with that of a nobler one. This produced "half blood," the best breed for campaign horses. There were then quite a number of studs which principally raised half blood and furnished most excellent campaign horses. I have much deplored their discontinuance, and name only the studs of the Government of Mecklenburg and those of Ivenack and Senn, although there are many others.

H. The race-course proved what a horse could do. It also showed that the size of the horse's belly is not the measure of its quality, which should be judged by the power and development of its muscles and exercise of its lungs. It is not at all flattering to our cavalry that it had to learn from civilians, and they in turn from England, what a horse could do.

S. It certainly must have been galling to the pride of Seidlitz's and Ziethen's successors. They objected to races as idle play. The aging cavalry leaders would have nothing to do with them.

H. The ardour of youth, however, seized upon the sport with enthusiasm. At the time when I entered the service, the giddiness which had seized the heads of the young riders was at its highest.

S. And by its exaggerations increased the opposition of the old men, and justified the same. These sometimes extremely ridiculous exaggerations, generally known under the name of Anglomania, did much to retard the good influence which the sport can exercise upon cavalry. I remind you of some of the figures we used to see on horseback then.

H. Whoever wanted to be considered a good rider shortened his stirrups until his knees were even with the pommel of his saddle, sat far back on the cantle, curved his back, bent his head back, hung on to the reins with his fists, called "Ho! Ho!" to the horse, see-sawed trotting, turned his fists in a circle when galloping, and presented a most ridiculous figure, eye-glass, cigar and riding whip being unfailing accompaniments.

S. It is not surprising that such figures should rouse the opposition of the cavalryman.

H. I remember the time when officers were punished by arrest for riding the English trot. To-day we teach the cavalry private the same kind of trot for easing him and the horse at long trots on the march.

S. Unfortunately this "light" trotting is seldom correctly taught even now. Most riders ease thereby themselves only, not the horse. There are but few who have learned at all to be particular about changing the horse's foot on which the rider rises in "light" trotting, and not working one foot more than the other.

Most riders also lean too far forward, placing undue weight on the forehead.

H. Nor was the condition of our racehorses of those days calculated to please our cavalry authorities, used to highly-fattened horses. Whenever a half-starved horse appeared, on whose protruding hip-bones a hat could be hung, it was immediately called a racer.

S. Another excess of the Anglomaniacs consisted in not only reducing the horse's fat by training, but his muscles also. Because a lean nag could run faster than a pot belly with his lungs full of fat, the Anglo-maniacs believed for some time that a half-starved appearance was the necessary attribute of a good racer. This, however, did not last long; speculation and competition soon overcame this prejudice, for experience showed that a horse with well-developed muscles was more enduring and faster than a starved one. Correct training, with an ample supply of good, nourishing food, puts a horse in such good wind that fat will not form on the lungs, nor add to the weight by growing under the skin, and that the muscles will become strong. For this reason the winners on the race track are, with few exceptions, the most beautiful horses, a thing that could not be said of them formerly.

H. Yet there still exists a certain contrast between race and campaign horses. You cannot deny that.

S. Not a contrast, but a difference. This difference consists mainly of two things. The jockey on the race course does not need more command over his horse than is requisite to make it pass over the track as fast as possible. The campaign rider must always have his horse under control. He must be able to halt at any moment or turn to engage in individual combat. In the one race which he rides, the jockey takes out of his horse all there is in it, without caring what becomes of the animal afterward; for the one victory, perhaps, brings in more than the horse is worth, if not in hard cash, yet in reputation for the stud. The campaign rider must keep his horse in serviceable condition as long as possible, and get out of him the greatest possible exertion for many years, daily, I might say.

H. Therefore the jockey stoops over and gives to the horse a support by the reins, the so-called fifth foot, to enable him to use the haunches merely as propelling power, while the short forelegs merely serve to support the weight of the body. The campaign rider, on the contrary, must sit with his centre of gravity over that of the horse, in order that a disturbance of the equilibrium in any direction may not withdraw the whole machine from the rider's control.

S. For this reason the jockey sometimes begins training the horse at an age at which the campaign rider allows his horse to disport himself in the pasture. Just think of the races of two-year-olds!

H. Many horses that go on the track as two-year-olds break down and are then fit for breeding purposes only.

S. That is a matter of indifference to the jockey, and must be, as long as he wins. But a campaign rider must not break down any horse before it has served its time. It is always a reflection on him to break his horse down prematurely.

H. Just now you mentioned the training of the horse, with which the jockey begins. I thought that race horses were not trained at all.

S. They are; they are trained like campaign horses and those that are to go to the high school, and if they are trained rationally, they are all trained according to the same principles. The only difference is in the degree to which the training is carried. All horses that are to be saddle horses must first be taught to stand saddle and bridle, allow the rider on their back, turn and halt upon the pull of the bridle, and move forward upon the application of whip and spur. The manner in which an intelligent rider gives a horse its first lessons is the same for all saddle horses. When the jockey has reached the degree of training with a horse intended for racing on level ground, he rests satisfied and does not carry the training farther, if for no other reason than this, that a higher degree of training, erect carriage and perfect equilibrium might interfere with the greyhound-like conformation of the legs and back, and thus with the speed which, in a racer, is the main point.

H. Then you think that the training required to make a serviceable campaign horse impairs the speed?

S. It is beyond a doubt that a horse, which by training has become perfectly balanced, cannot develop the same speed on the level track as the racer which uses the front legs merely to support his weight and the hind legs for propulsion, exclusively, all other circumstances as quality of breed, etc., being equal.

H. Your author of "New Cavalry Sermons" is of a different opinion. He insists that a perfectly broken horse must develop the greatest speed on the level track.

S. Should he ever make the experiment, he would convince himself of the contrary. But we are perfectly willing to put up with this in the campaign horse, because through rational training he gains in endurance. He is not used up so quickly; not to mention the fact that the racer is not sufficiently in the rider's control to be used as a campaign horse.

H. Races on level ground are not the only ones; we have hurdle races and steeplechases also.

S. These two kinds of races require a different degree of training. For this reason they are rarely ridden by the jockey, the owners themselves mostly riding. The object of the training for racing on the flat is merely to get the greatest speed without losing control of the horse. For this reason the race on the level track is so very difficult to ride. Bally's book on horse breeding (Hallberger, Stuttgart, 1836), gives an idea of it in the twenty-second chapter. The horse, not yet thoroughly bent or supple, is to be kept in the rider's control by a firm seat and correct use of the reins, the obedience, the carriage is to be such that it never gallops crosswise, but before coming to a turn, gallops correspondingly, and turns the corners as short as possible, with a corresponding gain of ground.

H. You speak of the firm seat of the jockey?

S. Certainly! the firm seat of the good jockey knows no other rules for the position of the middle part of the body than any seat of a good rider,

but is much harder to maintain because the hands have to hold much more weight, and the upper part of the body must frequently be bent forward to take the weight off the haunches, giving it liberty to act for propulsion only. We must not mistake the jockey's seat for that of the Anglomaniac. Good English Jockeys sit quite differently from their caricatures. As soon, however, as obstacles are to be taken, a bent, supple horse has more chances than a stiff one that has to be held by force. There the jockey's good riding no longer suffices. The horse must also be made obedient.

H. Yet we see not infrequently that winners on the level track are not beaten in hurdle races.

S. Mere hurdle races do not require much obedience of the horse toward the rider so long as the former is ready and eager to jump. In hurdle racing the rider of a capricious horse is not ashamed if the horse refuses an obstacle. He says: "He doesn't care to jump to-day; he doesn't seem to have slept well." This is not allowable for the campaign rider. His horse must jump at any time whenever he wants it, whether the horse likes it or not. Training must bring this about.

H. For this reason only those of the racers on the level track are used for hurdle racing which jump readily. I frequently heard the expression: "The horse has no heart at the obstacles; it is only good for racing on the flat."

S. The campaign rider, on the contrary, must be able to get every horse in the troop over the obstacles. For ordinary hurdle racing, also, a different degree of training is required from racing on level ground. Still more for steeplechasing, and yet more for hunting.

H. I have never seen or heard that a horse which was being trained for the hunt received a special school training.

S. You have read it anyway, for you have read Rosenberg's\* "Chance Ideas," where he says, "A whole lighthouse dawned upon me." He is describing the moment when he recognises what a high degree of command of the rider over the horse, of suppleness on the part of the latter, is required in order to have the least prospect of success in steeplechasing, and how Wilanowitz bent his race horses. It has recently been ascertained that for hunting, a bent, supple horse has far better chances than one that is not bent, and has to be held by force. Our leading hunters now train all their horses to obedience, even pillars being used. The great body of Anglomaniacs do not know this, and do not want to know it, because it entails too much work, and for this reason they are invariably beaten.

H. In accord with what you say, is my remark, that the gentlemen who were considered the best riders in racing with obstacles, and were the most successful, assumed a seat almost like the regulation cavalry seat.

\* NOTE.—Lieut.-General von Rosenberg, now one of the Inspectors-General of Cavalry, was in his youth the most brilliant steeplechaser rider in Germany. His regiment, the 13th Uhlans, was also conspicuous for the perfection of its training, years before the rest of the Cavalry had reached its present high level of efficiency.

How beautifully Wilanowitz sat on his "Anvil." There is a picture of it in existence somewhere.

S. Because altogether there is but one seat, particularly only one slope of the thigh which gives the greatest command over the horse. Whoever wishes to guide his horse safely over obstacles, must sit correctly. He can and will indulge in "eases" which we do not allow the recruit; eases, which at times of great exertion diminish fatigue; he probably will, for instance, advance the lower part of the leg farther when he is not using it, ease his spine, etc., while the most important part, the middle of the body, remains unchanged. And as soon as the rider approaches an obstacle you will notice him taking a smarter seat. The lower part of the leg is drawn back, also the upper part of his body, and the centre of gravity of the horse is again more nearly placed under that of the rider.

H. Does the horse lose speed through the degree of training necessary for hurdle racing?

S. There can be no doubt of this, though the loss may be so small as to be barely perceptible.

H. Yet there have been horses which, in racing on the level and over obstacles, defeated everything for some time.

S. Because there have been horses which by nature were faster than all others. There the loss was not so great as to counterbalance the difference of their natural gift.

H. The same might be said of hunting and chasing as of hurdle racing.

S. Almost, but not quite. For steeplechasing the horse must be better in hand and more supple than for hurdle racing, for the question is not only one of making a few jumps on a track otherwise most favourable for the horse, but of riding over all kinds of ground, smooth and broken. During the whole of the steeplechase, barring, perhaps, the last part, the rider must have control over his horse. Its suppleness must even be greater.

H. This may account for the fact that some good campaign horses, ridden by officers on the active list, beat race horses in steeplechasing.

S. You know from the time required to pass over the ground that the average speed in steeplechasing is less than on the flat, or in hurdle races; this is due to the high degree of training and to the balance which steeplechasers must possess.

H. Then you place steeplechases and hunting on the same level?

S. Not quite. Hunting and campaign riding are on the same level; both require the same degree of training; in both the rider must retain constant control over his horse. In steeplechasing the final question is of one horse being half a minute speedier than others; in campaign riding and hunting this is a matter of indifference, the only question there is of the rider's correctly managing his horse. For steeplechases, therefore, horses are made obedient, taking care, however, not to cause too great a loss of speed by the schooling; a horse may, therefore, win steeplechases without being a good hunter or campaign horse.

*time lost in  
steeds -  
horses -*

*good hunter  
a campaigner*

H. There you are right; we had a striking example of that in the War of 1864. Major A., of the General Staff, one of our best horsemen, accompanied a troop of cavalry out on reconnaissance; a somewhat smaller troop of the enemy retired and was pursued. Cocktail, the Major's horse, a well-known winner of steeplechases, thought it was a race, and outstripped friend and foe against his rider's will. Fortunately, he kept the left side of the road, which was frozen and had ditches and hedges alongside, so that the Major could parry to the right the weak, left cuts of the Danish dragoons, until he had ridden through their "pulk," and, reaching a cross-road, was able to turn off, while the enemy continued straight on.

S. Cocktail, being intended for a steeplechaser, had not that amount of schooling which is required for a campaign horse. You see, both methods, steeplechasing and campaign riding, end in the long gallop and shock, *i.e.*, in the "finish." But the methods of the final schooling of the horse, and of the action of horse and rider, must be kept strictly apart. The steeplechase rider, while allowing his horse a low position of the head and neck, allows ample play for the haunches, manages the horse with both hands, firmly feeling his mouth, and takes care not to disturb it in the jump from a gallop. When it comes to the finish, he does everything to bring out its full speed; it makes no difference whether or not the horse can be stopped immediately after passing the finishing post. It is eminently proper and absolutely necessary for the race horse to look to the reins for support. The campaign horse's mouth, on the contrary, must not be felt too firmly, because but one hand is available for the reins; it must be capable of being stopped at any time, even when the hind hand is under the body, or of making a short turn. It must be accustomed to carry itself and to go with loose reins, *i.e.*, quite lightly drawn reins, and to look out for its own safety. In dense, closed columns, in the rear rank, in dust, in the dark, in the smoke of powder, the soldier is unable to see the road. During evolutions in closed formations his attention is otherwise engaged by the service; the horse must also be accustomed, suddenly, without any run, to jump high or wide; in short it must always take care of itself and preserve its balance in any event. For these reasons the long gallop must be ridden with a certain reservation, and the better gifted horses must be able to regulate their stride at the gallop by that of their less gifted fellows; the same holds good of the shock, the efficiency of which depends upon the ranks being closed.

H. Did I understand you rightly in saying that the best training for the campaign horse is also the best for the hunter?

S. Beyond a doubt.

H. And yet there are many hunters which still have such difficulties of neck and spine that at the beginning, before going any sharp pace, they are out of hand and would not do for troop horses.

S. They are not the best hunters and, at the beginning of the run, when not yet under the rider's control, unsuitable for it; for if the run should happen to be so short that the rider does not get control over his



horse, he is not in at the death, and continues to bolt, under shouts of laughter from the others.

H. But, on the other hand, there are many hunters, although never regularly trained, yet going faultlessly with hounds.

S. I told you before that it makes no difference whether the required degree of suppleness, balance and obedience is gained by rational work at the gallop on a straight line, or at a trot, partly on the circle. The degree of training to be attained remains the same; but whoever goes to work systematically and according to the irrefutable principles of the art of riding, having due regard for the individuality of each horse; whoever works young horses, step by step, rationally combines bending, trot and gallop, will reach the desired end, while sparing (nay, increasing) the horse's strength more than the rider who starts in with the hunter's gallop and has control over his horse only during this gallop.

H. What you say agrees with what Plinzner (in his excellent work on the horse gymnasium) says about the training of the racers, hunters, campaign and school horses—that there should not be any difference in training; that racers, hunters, and campaign riders and school riders have no cause for quarrelling with one another. It is a pity Plinzner called his book "Gymnasium," a title which is apt, perhaps, to deter any practical rider from reading it, for enthusiastic riders, it is well known, rejoice when they have no longer anything to do with a gymnasium.

S. Rosenberg says the same as Plinzner, only in different words. This most experienced hunter and steeplechaser of the present time lays the greatest stress upon obedience of the horse, bending and rational schooling. That both are right you may judge from the fact that members of reigning houses taking any part at all in sport are, almost without exception, able to ride very correctly. Their horses, trained by equerries, are, without exception, rendered obedient according to the principles of the school, and trained to the degree requisite for hunting and campaign riding.

H. These gentlemen also have the means to buy new, good horses whenever the old ones are ruined.

S. They have the means, yet they do not need them, for frequently they ride their horses longer than other riders. How old did "Sadowa" become under the Emperor? She was, as campaign horse and hunter, equally good.

H. What do you think of the paperchases?

S. Paperchases are the best school for campaign riding, because the ground can be selected as most suitable for the quality of the horses, and the degree of training of horse and rider; they furnish the best means for pushing hunting and campaign riding to the highest degree of perfection.

H. Whenever I had anything to say, I treated paperchases as riding instruction on the terrain.

S. A riding instruction which, in the shape of pleasure, increases the love for it. The paperchase is the school; the real chase the examination.

H. The paperchase has this further practical advantage over the

real chase, that it can be indulged in without damage to the fields, which makes it less expensive, and it can therefore be engaged in by those less well off.

S. That is correct. It is to be regretted that not all cavalry officers have the means to ride in real chases.

H. When considering how racing, hunting, campaign and school riding go hand in hand, one can hardly think it possible that there was a time when most of the authorities of the cavalry (I mean the time previous to 1843) held racing and hunting in disfavour.

S. The hunters of those days, especially the young gentlemen, were mostly to blame for this; the parodied racing-seat which they affected, when protected against official censure by the red hunting-jacket, could not but offend the eye of their superiors. They also took every opportunity to express their dislike of systematic instruction in the school. We used to hear such expressions as, "The fooleries of the riding-school are things of the past." "An intelligent rider considers the horse only as a means of transportation to carry him from one point to the other as quickly as possible; how, is a matter of indifference," etc.

H. Add to this the excesses occasioned by the "par force" chases; I mean those of the cup and games of chance, and many catastrophes of a financial nature.

S. Then everybody says: "That comes from the sport, from the Anglomania." And the aged superior was no longer aware that behind this censure there was hypocritically hidden a dislike to continuous fast riding, for which he no longer possessed the necessary elasticity. If the old cavalry leaders of 1843 had, on an average, been as young and nimble on horse-back as they had been in 1815 in almost the same positions, they would themselves have taken up the sport and chases and produced good campaign riding, while at the same time having an opportunity of preventing, by their presence, the excesses mentioned.

H. Against a return of such unfavourable consideration on the part of the superiors we are now safe. I need only mention that last fall we read in the papers of two cavalry generals riding a bare-back "par force" chase of several hours' duration.

S. Just at present we are on the right road in this direction; but it is not without advantage to recall how formerly we went astray and may stray again, unless we remain *toujours en vedette*. The danger now rather is that a thorough school training may be undervalued, and that as a school training be considered what is merely a superficial, dilettante production, not unlike the circus productions which are mistaken for the art of riding by the public at large.

H. It is queer that at the same time when we were seized by the Anglomania, circus riding attracted more general attention.

S. It was due to the fact that in the riding public there was an instinctive and unexpressed feeling that both had been neglected, the bold riding forward and the art of riding properly.

H. The latter found a place of refuge in the circus.

S. But what a one! Just as the great riding public replaced thorough campaign riding by the production of the race course, thus it mistook circus riding for the art of riding. Neither requires years of labour in order to thoroughly bend a horse and make him active. The trainer gallops the horse for a few months and then wins victories and applause on the race-course; the circus rider teaches his horse in an equally short time a few tricks that bring him money and unmerited applause.

H. Did not the high school, as produced in the circus, have at least the good effect of reviving general attention and interest for the art of riding?

S. But what we see in the circus is not the art of riding.

H. I will not mention the jumping through hoops, retrieving by horses and kneeling. These are productions for the eye, given for a change, to attract and amuse those that have no knowledge of riding. I mean only the high school as it was ridden there by individuals.

S. Barring a few horses trained by Steinbrecht and bought by Renz, it is not the high school at all that was ridden, and the fact that such productions were called and acknowledged as high school, served only to dim the definitions. If you look closely at the "passage," "piaff," etc., of most circus riders you will find that the hind hand is brought under and bent in order to carry the fore hand, but that the hind hand and haunches remain stiff. The horse makes motions with the fore hand which it has been taught by hunger and timely feeding, whip and sugar, and because the circus rider does not take the time to make the hind hand supple, as can be done only by years of labour, the horse is dragging the hind hand. It cannot get it under. When it has to bring the hind legs forward, it brings them out sideways because they are too stiff to place under the body.

H. The circus rider has not the means to train and feed a horse for years. It must bring in money at an early day.

S. It forces him into that superficiality with which he breaks instead of trains; treats horses like dogs instead of as horses. That is not riding; for riding is the art of making horses unconditionally obedient to the rider. Should, however, the circus rider once ride the horse in the open, on which he rode the high school in the circus, he would not get it by a hay waggon or hunchbacked woman if it shied and did not want to pass, for he has no control over it. It does not obey him.

H. But when invited by officers, Renz rode quite well on the terrain, to the surprise of the connoisseurs.

S. Yes, on the horses which Steinbrecht had broken to the school, and which he had bought. It is not impossible that Renz had sufficient knowledge of the art of riding to train a horse thus himself. Otherwise, he could not have presented a horse broken to the school by Steinbrecht. But as you stated very correctly, he had no time for it. When superficial productions on miserably trained horses brought in just as much money, why should he waste his time on the exact school?

H. Do you remember the sensation caused by Baucher's book, about 1840?

S. That very sensation proves the poverty of those days in true riders. You have read how Plinzner criticises Baucher?

H. Certainly! At the end of every chapter he waxes warm against Baucher. I think, however, that Plinzner knows the much-talked-of Baucher by his book only, and never saw him ride. Even the sentence from a letter which he said he received from a Prussian officer—*La cavalerie Prussienne, pour maintenir sa réputation, s'est vu obligée d'adopter votre manière d'équitation*—made me indignant.

S. And after you had seen him ride, did you change your opinion?

H. I modified my opinion so far at least as to make use of the opportunity for observing his system in actual practice, and forming an opinion based upon facts. For as I have stated once before, I believe that language is insufficient to express everything about cavalry so as to make misunderstanding impossible. About the middle of our century, Baucher, who then rode in Dejean's circus, in Berlin, offered to show his system practically to a number of officers in a course of thirty hours.

S. Pardon me, please. But whoever wants to train a rider in thirty hours, has ideas of riding which I do not care to share.

H. Baucher did not mean to do that. He intended only to teach his system practically to eight officers who had been riding for years, in thirty hours, because he had found out how much his book had been misunderstood. He knew, as well as you and I, that riding could not be learned so quickly. On the contrary, he was opposed to all undue haste in training horses, and his motto was: *Plus vous allez lent, plus vous irez vite*, as I said once before.

S. Nothing is to be said against the appropriateness of this motto.

H. I gradually recognised, as I rode under him, that in the eyes of intelligent riders no one had hurt him more than those who rode by his book and had, moreover, failed throughout to understand him.

S. He expressly sets up the principle that the horse should be "behind the bridle," when everybody knows that all control over the horse ceases whenever it is behind the bridle.

H. Here the poverty of the language played him a mean trick. He demanded, like any true rider, that the horse should be "between thigh and bridle," and logically infers that, therefore, it must be "in front of the thigh" and "behind the bridle." The whole dispute was about the meaning of the expression. What he calls "behind the bridle," our school riders call "at the bridle." Where we say of a horse that it is "behind the bridle," Baucher says that it is "behind the thigh." He means the same thing, but uses different words.

S. I wish for his sake that you may not be mistaken.

H. I cannot omit to mention, that Baucher had extraordinary strength in his thighs, and was able, without the aid of spurs, so to squeeze his horses that they stepped forward from sheer fear. Thus it came that he

managed the horse, apparently, with loose reins, *i.e.*, by the mere weight of the reins.

S. The rider of the high school attained the same on a perfectly-broken school horse.

H. I must also honestly confess that, in his instructions, Baucher supposed every rider capable of the same thigh pressure as himself.

S. In that case his system was not suited for all riders.

H. I gladly admit that, as well as that I would not have dared to ride the horses broken by him. For this very reason all those who ride by his book only, work the horses mostly "behind the bridle," according to our ideas, and ruin his reputation by rendering their horses restive and fretful.

S. That comes from commencing with handwork without rider.

H. The injurious consequences of which are not removed by the strength of Baucher's thighs.

S. Baucher rejects the snaffle and gives every horse the curb at once.

H. Yes.

S. That is why he cannot thoroughly bend back and haunches.

H. He considers the bending of the haunches of great importance; bending of the back he considers an illusion.

S. For this reason his horses are bridled too high, with curved back, carry the nose against the chest, and show a faulty break in the curve of the neck back of the head.

H. You must not forget that he rode for the circus only, and that circus productions alone were the object he sought to accomplish.

S. What is one to do with such a system for the purpose of campaign riding?

H. I never thought of recommending the system for campaign riding, pure and simple.

S. *A propos*, I have discovered ground on which we can agree.

H. I never doubted that. Baucher did not show all the evolutions of the high school on every one of his horses. Whenever this or that horse showed itself unsuited for something, he would not require it of the horse.

S. Then his riding is to the correct art of riding the same as Jahn's method to the Swedish gymnastics, the principles of which are now prevailing in our army. By the former, every individual exercises wherever he chooses; by the latter all the muscles are strengthened.

H. The comparison is a good one.

S. Still Baucher's riding is more like the training of a dog than horse breaking.

H. At any rate he carried to perfection the entering into the horse's individuality and its mode of thinking. He placed himself in the horse's state of mind and talked horse language to it, so to speak. He did not employ aids as a forcible means, but as a means of making himself understood. He rewarded the horse every time it obeyed the rider's will.

S. With sugar or food?

H. Yes, the crude animal in the beginning, later on only by caressing and praising, and whenever anyone would omit to do so after a horse had done a thing well, he would call, *Caressez donc, barbare!* The horse's usual reward consisted in having the aids relaxed.

S. I am very much opposed to placing, every few moments, the reins on the horse's neck with extended hands and arms, as is so frequently seen. It is unpractical and does not look well. The horse is sufficiently rewarded when the pull and pressure cease, but the horse must remain "at the bridle"; that is what the horse is to learn. The total abandonment of the effect of the bridle was caused by the perverse idea that the horse must be broken from front to rear, and that the hind hand is to be worked afterward. Because the horses had not been thoroughly bent, they sometimes proved refractory when required to be "up to the reins," and the rider gave them the reins to avoid evil consequences. Many riders do it from a kind of coquetry. They have seen it on the race track and believe that it is part of good riding. They do not suspect to what they expose themselves and their knowledge of riding. It is a fashion. Formerly the art of riding before spectators consisted in not showing any of the aids. Now the aids are always used. Every time the horse is given the reins he loses his carriage.

H. Baucher did not do so invariably, but only when he meant to rest the horse. The usual reward was a relaxing of the aids, so slight, however, that only a connoisseur could notice it.

S. That is nothing new. The old high school teaches that too.

H. Still I think that the old high school used more forcible means than Baucher, about such as would be appropriate for the former inferior breed of horses. Baucher has certainly contributed much to the fact that our most skilled equerries treat the superior breed we now have more humanely, enter into the animal's way of reasoning, and do not tame it by mere force.

S. At this conclusion the high school would have arrived without Baucher, by the mere association with a better breed.

H. At any rate Baucher was not such a bad spoiler of horses as Plinzner describes him at the end of every chapter. He was an intelligent man who had had to do with horses all his life. I concede that all those who work by his book, without understanding him correctly, spoil horses.

S. Then he becomes a spoiler of horses, indirectly, by means of his book.

H. Anyone may be misunderstood; so may Plinzner, and he is certainly not a spoiler of horses. I have also conceded that I do not consider Baucher's method applicable to campaign riding. But I find that he has much that can be used to advantage and has been used, though with some modifications. At any rate he made a great sensation in his days; turned attention again to school riding at the time of the Anglomania, and gave rise to thought and discussion. And if he had invariably been wrong,



but yet had succeeded in restoring the old method to its full authority, in arousing interest in it, that would have been a merit in itself.

S. If it were his only one, it would be a negative one only.

H. Yet there is something positive in it. Even Kaehler acknowledges that Baucher's system produced, among us also, greater activity in this field of the mounted service.

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#### EIGHTH CONVERSATION. (FEBRUARY 21ST, 1886.)

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#### PROGRESS OF THE CAVALRY FROM 1843 TO THE PRESENT TIME.

H. Toward the end of our last conversation we have sufficiently discussed the work on the track and in the circus to be entitled to-day to some exercise in invigorating air.

S. And we had reached the period when Wrangel broke in among old peace practices like a fresh breeze on stagnant air.

H. Yes, the cavalry exercises near Berlin, which he directed in 1843, ushered in a new era for the German cavalry.

S. In the work which you have cited, Kaehler gives an excellent condensed review of his activity and work when he was the acknowledged highest authority of the cavalry, although not at its head.

H. It is very interesting to observe how, in the time from 1843 to 1863, Wrangel's ideas gradually underwent a change. In 1843 he drilled a large body of cavalry, during the first few days, according to dispositions previously made and communicated to the troops; afterward he forbade this practice expressly, and ordered that none but extemporised off-hand exercises be held. In 1843 he made the cavalry regiments retire in skirmishing order through the intervals of the advancing columns. Later on this was abolished as impracticable in presence of the enemy, and the echelons in rear now had to attack the wings and flanks. Nor did he at a later date use such deep formations as in 1843, while in 1863 he speaks of drilling in single rank. In his old age, I heard him say with a sigh, that he had survived himself, and considered everything he had formerly instituted as wrong, and that he had become convinced that on account of the increased fire effect of the other arms, cavalry could not act except in single rank.

S. It is a proof of Wrangel's insight and talent that he was still capable of keeping abreast of the time, even in his advanced age, and modifying his ideas in accordance with the latest experiences, as well as improvements in arms. In 1843, there clung to him some of the things which during the past quarter of a century he had not seen done differently, nor been allowed to do differently. A practice of twenty-eight years could not well remain without some influence on the actions of a man who suddenly came into a position to develop himself freely.

H. Wrangel's work is characterised by the cavalry exercises of 1843;

next in his essay of 1851, which acquaints the army with his ideas, after he had been deputed to inspect the Prussian cavalry regiments. This gave him the duties of an inspector-general of cavalry without being commissioned as such. Next followed the cavalry exercises of 1855, the new regulations of 1855, and his "Comments," etc., of 1863.

S. In the first cavalry exercises Wrangel merely practises the employment of masses as a whole, and the forms similar to those proposed by Thielemann, Borstell, Ziethen, and Blücher shortly after the Wars of Liberation. A proof of Wrangel's far-sightedness is that already at that time he was preparing the grave for the cumbersome division column in the regulations, and placing more value on dismounted fire action.

H. In 1851 he placed the chief value on the cavalry spirit. It is also to be noted that here for the first time the individual training of the man is insisted on by the highest cavalry authority. He explains how the inspection is to be made and eschews all evolutions which have not the charge for their end and aim.

S. The ability to pass over long distances at a gallop and the endeavour to gain the enemy's flank, are likewise matters on which he lays stress. In this way he materially promoted the true cavalry spirit.

H. Lastly, we find in the "Comments," the three line tactics laid down for the first time as a fundamental principle, while he expresses a desire for a cavalry corps of from ten to fourteen regiments, and annual exercises for such corps.

S. I do not consider these as his most happy ideas, for it is easy to conceive situations where it is better to charge in two lines than in three, nor have cavalry corps of a strength of fourteen regiments proved a success in war.

H. In the year 1853 followed the great cavalry exercises with sixty-one squadrons, near Berlin. I took part in them myself. In view of my subordinate position of chief of an *Abtheilung* among the great mass of artillery, I cannot presume to give a judgment on the exercises as a whole. But I could not free myself then from a feeling of disappointment. From what I had read and heard of the exercises of 1843, I had expected those of 1853 to be brisker and livelier.

S. This would likewise appear from Kaehler's work. He names as the cause the presence of seventeen landwehr squadrons, whose efficiency, especially in strength and training of horses, was not what is required of cavalry. I also believe that the mass was too large to admit of uniform leading.

H. The most important result of these exercises was the regulations of 1855.

S. They at least regulated the gaits, definitely introduced squadron columns and regulated the charge.

H. Kaehler calls the cavalry exercises of 1853 and the new cavalry regulations of 1855 the beginning of a new era. I should place this beginning in the year 1843, when Wrangel's influence began to become more generally felt.

S. The most excellent thing handed down to us by Wrangel is, in my opinion, his "Comments" of 1863, on the training and use of cavalry. He demands in the first place one common principle and an inspector, to insure its observance. He renews the old principles of Frederick the Great, which require the horses to be ridden in the open in winter, thereby assuring the health of the horses. He likewise lays stress on individual riding, and calls to mind the Great King's principle that every day is lost on which the rider does not exercise his horse. As already stated, he forbids the issuing of dispositions before the drill, and wants none but extemporised exercises. Lastly, he wants the inspections to be made unexpectedly. He well knew the evil consequences of regular inspections, with previously fixed limits for the time of training, causing the work, the drilling, to be done solely with a view to the inspection, as I have frequently pointed out.

H. I consider the manner in which Wrangel introduced his opinions and ideas, as valuable as the ideas themselves. It was this manner that brought life into matters.

S. Wrangel's singular personality is known to and popular with all.

H. Wrangel's popularity rests to-day, I regret to say, more in the remembrance of the last ten years of his life in which he had survived himself, and in which he was conspicuous by his wit and his droll appearance, than in his weight as a military authority.

S. Thoughtful soldiers will never forget his merits.

H. Yet anyone in thinking of Wrangel, has in mind the picture of the droll old man as he was in his ninetieth year, rather than his appearance as a keen cavalry general of sixty years. In those days the small, dry, lean old man, firmly seated without stirrups, as though one with his horse (he invariably rode without stirrups, until in his old age he thereby contracted an injury) came riding up with his sour face, and criticised everything with biting sharpness. Every one of his words was funny, and his criticism all the more pungent. He had absolutely no regard for persons. When he found anything to criticise, it was a matter of utter indifference to him who was concerned. Considerations for former meritorious service, for fathers of families, for age, he knew not. It was said that he had a stone in the place of a heart. If anyone appeared to him not active enough on horseback, he expressed his regret at not seeing him again, and urged his removal from active service. He dispensed arrest with great liberality.

S. He did not earn much popularity in those days.

H. Not with the old generals and regimental commanders. They feared and hated him. He removed them. But the young, aspiring generation in the cavalry which had not been sufficiently pedantic to suit these old leaders, and had been prevented by them in the furtherance of smart cavalry service, liked the old Wrangel all the more, as his severity brought promotion. His wit was amusing and his severity rarely descended on the head of individuals among the young gentlemen.

S. The best means of becoming popular among the young men is certainly to get them promotion.

H. Add to this that Wrangel was interested in everything connected with smart riding. He was never absent from the races, he rode to hounds and tormented no one in the riding school with pedantries of form. He indicated the object of cavalry, the state of efficiency it was to endeavour to reach. He met with response from the young generation which went to work and reflected by what means to accomplish this purpose. Without this active and forcible interference on his part, his words, orders, dispositions and writings would have remained dead letters, as likewise all his efforts would have been without lasting result, but for the co-operation of the then young generation.

S. The most lasting effect was, that among this generation he was training a pupil, who became his immediate successor as the head and highest authority of the cavalry.

H. You mean Prince Frederick Charles. Before passing to him I would like to speak to you of another appearance in the cavalry world which, at the time when Wrangel's days of glory were nearing their end, was much talked of, I mean Edelsheim's system of individual training.

S. Edelsheim brought his ideas forward just at the right time, when Wrangel emphatically pointed out the importance of good individual training for the efficiency of a mass of cavalry. In those days everyone chiefly occupied himself with individual training.

H. Did not Edelsheim neglect individual training?

S. What makes you think so?

H. I remember that three officers of the Guard Corps went to Vienna to study Edelsheim's system. This bold hussar leader had become the topic in all cavalry circles by his brilliant charges at Magenta and Solferino in the campaign of 1859. What I heard from these officers was to the effect that Edelsheim considered our horses overtrained, and that they should be left more nearly in their natural state.

S. Whoever says that of Edelsheim has misunderstood him. Edelsheim did, as I do now, recognise that our horses were too much mistrained. He saw that paces were called passage and shoulder in, that were no side paces at all, but a stumbling about in unnatural movements. He abolished such a tormenting of horses. He preferred to gain, and did gain, the balance of the horse by increasing and decreasing the paces on a straight line instead of by ruinous cross-stepping in faulty lessons.

H. So far as I know, he did not care to bend the horse's back by side paces.

S. Because the Hungarian horses furnished a material whose temper and character were not well suited to high training, and inclined to resistance, when much annoyed by "kniebeln" and premature use of spurs; Edelsheim knew that well, and very correctly adapted his method of training to the race. He reduced the riding of side paces for the very reason that his work was much more thorough than had been the case heretofore. In this he is in thorough accord with Plinzner, who considers it wrong to

give a horse a more oblique position in and for the side paces than it is capable of by previous training.

H. What do you say to the training of riders on the longe? So far as I know, it has been introduced throughout the Austrian army.

S. This training of the recruit on the longe may prove to you how thoroughly Edelsheim wants individual training carried out; it indicates that he knew the high school well. As the scholar of the high school had to learn between the pillars and without reins how to sit on the school horse, which moved at the motion of the instructor's whip, so Edelsheim puts the recruit on the horse which is led by the longe, without reins, and arms crossed behind the back. In this way he prevents the rider from giving the horse a chuck in the mouth every time he becomes unsteady in his seat.

H. It is true that the poor recruit horses suffer much rude, though involuntary, pulling of the reins when the recruit fears he is falling off.

S. So much so that if the poor beast is not already a chunk of wood, devoid of feeling, it soon will be; furthermore, Edelsheim does not put the reins in the hands of the recruit until he has become firm on the horse on the longe with hands behind the back, until his seat is firm. You see, he works very thoroughly, very systematically; he gains thereby much for the further training of the rider, for when the recruit does not get the reins in his hands until his seat is firm, it never occurs to him afterward to hang on by the reins to keep his seat, while it costs much time to break the recruit of this bad habit when once acquired, because he had to handle the reins from the very first day.

H. I wonder where Edelsheim gets the instructors and the time to carry out this instruction?

S. Of course there are not enough non-commissioned officers for instructors, and men must be employed who are serving in their second and third year. But the time is easily made up, for a recruit who is not instructed in the handling of the reins until he can sit by himself, correctly and firmly, learns much quicker how to handle the reins well and properly. I wish to refer you here to one of Baucher's principles: *Plus vous allez lent, plus vous irez vite.*

H. You seem to advocate that we should likewise teach the recruit the seat with the use of the longe, and without reins, before putting the reins in his hand.

S. I should not object if this method were introduced; I realise, however, that it would be difficult to get such a radical change in the system of training adopted; moreover, a rational use of whip and longe is likewise difficult, and the chief difficulty would be that we have not enough men who understand it. We have other means, however, to turn, at the beginning, the recruit's attention to the seat alone, and for this reason I do not place such weight on the introduction of this method of training recruits.

H. I reserve to myself the privilege of questioning you thoroughly on this subject later on; let us now return to the thread of our conversation

and discuss the further development of the cavalry under the influence of Prince Frederick Charles.

S. This eminent prince united in himself many qualities which enabled him to exercise the most favourable influence on the further development of the arm. His military passion, his restless activity, his high personal position in the reigning family, and his rich experience gathered in the course of promotion in peace time as well as in the field before the enemy, could not but make him the proper man for improving the army, even had he been devoid of natural gift.

H. You have failed to mention a certain smartness and eagerness which in a true horseman must never be lacking and which were in his blood; when quite young this eagerness caused him in the Baden campaign, in 1849, to throw himself upon the enemy far in advance of the charging squadron, where he was wounded and some of his suite killed and some wounded.

S. That charge was much talked about at the time.

H. Much and severe criticism was pronounced; he was blamed for being the cause of the death of some officers, which it was said he had caused by his youthful ardour. It was chiefly from those discreet old men who wanted cool deliberation alone, and were opposed to bold daring on his part.

S. It was asserted at the time that he had drawn the squadron into a senseless charge.

H. His opponents said so, but it was not the case; the squadron meant to pursue the retiring enemy; the Prince asked permission to take part in the charge, for he had no command in that campaign. He placed himself at the head and charged on the enemy; the squadron followed, but could not ride as fast as the better-mounted officers, who remained with the Prince; thus he and the officers together received the volley. The squadron of not more than 100 riders following in rear made 250 prisoners. Is that a senseless charge? Fortunately, the King, informed of the actual facts, rewarded the Prince, who had been wounded by two bullets, and thus did not smother his incipient ardour, as the fault-finders would have been glad to do.

S. It is of the greatest importance that independence and boldness in the cavalry be ever encouraged by praise, though it may afterwards be sometimes discovered that too great a risk had been taken.

H. Initiative and boldness are always better than a too long waiting for orders and the missing of a favourable opportunity.

S. In 1863 we find him again as commanding general and successor of Wrangel in the command of the Third Army Corps, after having previously commanded a squadron, a regiment, a brigade and a division. At the cavalry exercises under Wrangel, in 1853, he was already in command of a brigade.

H. It is hard to define what improvements of the arm are to be ascribed to him personally, though we all still have in mind how continuously and indefatigably he worked, for there exist but few writings by him.



S. We find enough in the instructions and orders he gave, and which we read in Kaehler's book. There you find—and it suffices for us and supports the ideas I have formed—the following: He laid the greatest stress on individual training; he would not have the echelons in rear charge except on the flanks and in a slanting direction; he deprecated all formalism, and held every leader responsible for choosing such a formation and method as to reach his aim with the least expenditure of time and energy; he strove for simplicity of the evolutions; he made the independent riding of the individual man the chief object of the training; he did not rest contented with a good drill on the level drill ground, but demanded equal precision in the evolutions on the terrain. In the instructions for his corps, in 1861, he wants the drill made sharp and short; he demands that horses be exercised even on days of rest, and thus renews the principles of Frederick the Great. New for that time was the requirement to drill in single rank, to charge with the squadron inverted, to develop the full speed and to regulate by order the heretofore forbidden English trot, when trotting at ease under the name of "easy trot." In the regulations issued by him he likewise was ahead of his time, and made the column of troops the one chiefly used, which the regulations of fourteen years later introduced for squadron and regimental columns. Lastly, he considered it necessary to bring to mind the importance of the closeness of the charge, and to emphasize it again and again.

H. These decisions of the Prince belong to a time when he was not as yet at the head of the cavalry as its inspector-general, to which position he was not called until after the War of 1866 had demonstrated that the cavalry did not have that share in the success which had been expected. After this time it is impossible to ascertain what measures are to be ascribed to his activity. Kaehler himself, a great admirer of the Prince, says that his appointment as inspector-general did not quite fulfil the hopes entertained by the cavalry branch of the service.

S. Considering the position of the Prince within the royal family, it is natural that as yet it cannot be ascertained what improvements are to be attributed to him and what to other, still living, influential persons. Anyway, it cannot but be assumed that he took a due share in everything that was done. In the War of 1870 Kaehler says one of the first things he did was to push the cavalry under his control on the enemy with orders to stay there. In this way he initiated that *rôle* of our cavalry of which you spoke with so much praise in your letters on cavalry in the campaign of 1870. Furthermore, it is not possible that in his inspections the Prince should have exerted any influence on the cavalry as a whole other than in the sense of the instructions of 1861 and 1863, drawn up by him for his corps. The essential changes in the cavalry, the work of the Stollberg cavalry commission, the project of regulations of 1873, the regulations of 1875, must have been suggested by him.

H. The cavalryman most frequently mentioned in and after the War of 1870 is General von Schmidt.

S. And how much did the Prince do to make General von Schmidt's

ideas prevail? It was chiefly due to the Prince's efforts that his collected instructions were printed on account of their high value, as expressly stated in the introduction.

H. Schmidt certainly was one of the most prominent cavalymen of the last few decades.

S. His energy in war and his capacity for leading large bodies of cavalry cannot be denied.

H. Yet he had many opponents.

S. They belonged in great part to the remnants of those adherents of the principles prevailing from 1815 to 1845, who would like to make riding in the *manège* and the circle the end and aim of all cavalry work.

H. He was found fault with for ruining too many horses.

S. It is true, Schmidt makes some demands in this direction which, in my opinion, go too far, for Schmidt was more a drill master of masses of cavalry than a moulder of the individual, especially the horse. The damage done, however, is more due to his admirers and all those who misunderstood him, than to himself.

H. On the occasion of his death, I heard one of our most influential officers make the remark that the death of this brilliant leader had perhaps saved the lives of several thousand horses.

S. That is not impossible, for every great master has pupils who imagine that they can surpass him by going farther in his direction than he does. As Schmidt, in his demands, approached the limits of the possible, any step beyond must do harm.

H. The improvements made in the cavalry after the war can be epitomised under the following heads: 1. Care in the training in reconnaissance service, by the instruction of officers, as well as by rendering the horses capable of long-continued rapid movement; 2. Definite, but elastic rules for the leading of large bodies; 3. Greater mobility of the masses by the introduction of the squadron column, regimental column, dressing toward the centre in troop and squadron, removal of the term inversion and of all evolutions which have no tactical, war-like purpose; 4. Importance attached to individual training and individual riding; 5. Armament of the cavalry with a long-range firearm and thorough instruction of every horseman in firing.

S. It is not to be denied that the work was carried on incessantly and with much insight.

H. Since you acknowledge that, I am curious to hear, in detail, the objections you have to make to the encomiums I have bestowed on the cavalry. It would be preferable, if you would communicate to me the system which you would use for the training of the troops.

S. It never occurred to me to introduce a new system—to become a reformer. The improvements which I desire I have already touched upon. If you wish to hear them recapitulated and substantiated, you must ask me questions of detail.

H. Good! I shall try to arrange my questions systematically and begin to plague you with them the next time.

## NINTH CONVERSATION. (MARCH 7TH, 1886.)

OF THE PRELIMINARY TRAINING AND SELECTION  
OF THE REMOUNT RIDERS.

H. How would it suit you if in my special questions as to what you would like to see altered or improved in our cavalry, I should begin with the training of the horse? For a good cavalryman, when speaking of the troops, will invariably think of the horses first.

S. Certainly; and then the first question is to what men to entrust the training of the horses, and what ought to be their capabilities and previous training?

H. There we again have the story of the egg and the fowl.

S. They cannot, it is true, be kept completely separate, one from the other. In the first place I must repeat what I stated before this, that to-day we are spending too much time, work and energy, on the riding school, and, in comparison, bestow but a stepmotherly care on practical riding. Yet the latter is the more important for the soldier.

H. I have always believed this the natural consequences of our short term of service; three years are not enough to learn riding perfectly. The riders must be taught the first principles in the open or covered riding school; and there remains then too little time for practical riding.

S. There must be time enough, otherwise there is no sense in the entire cavalry training, whose sole aim is to produce efficient mounted combatants. The ideal is to so train the men as to make them one with their horses, like the wild mounted tribes; they are one with the horse because they grow up with and on it. The old civilised states took mounted tribes in their pay, but their unreliability suggested to them the idea of themselves training horsemen, whence the riding schools; they are a means to an end. They served to make firm riders of the men, and trained the horses for use in war. It is impossible, especially with our present short term of service, for each soldier to break his own horse; for this a number of men must receive special training. If this is not done, it is at the expense of the thorough breaking and efficiency of the horse. Since want of time does not permit us to train the great mass of horsemen into remount riders and good fighters on horseback, the majority of the riders should be trained solely for the latter purpose. The riding track is to be merely a means to an end, just as the side paces are to render the horse adroit and obedient. The horses are not taught the side paces in order that by this means the rider may shine at the inspections; during the training they are to be used with such horses as are not made supple by the simple, ordinary lessons. Hence, the

great mass of riders must be kept from the side paces and the tricks of school riding.

H. Don't you subsequently select the small number of remount riders from this great mass?

S. No; whoever fails at once to show special fitness for riding (which may be observed almost immediately after instruction begins) belongs to that great mass of horsemen who never hear anything of equestrianism, passage, shoulder in, etc.

H. Would not this experiment be hazardous? If, under this subdivision of the service, it should become apparent in the course of years that the great mass does not ride well enough, the whole cavalry would be in a half-raw condition.

S. It is not necessary to make this experiment; it has been made for five years, and I know the particular squadron quite well. The result of the rational, simple manner pursued by a few picked riders in making horses active, was that the horses remained remarkably sound in their legs. Lameness was rare, internal disease still rarer. The squadron came afterward into other hands when work was resumed on the old plan; instead of training a few men for remount riding, the squadron, like most of the others, gave to the great mass of riders a riding school instruction which they could neither understand nor digest, and which, while doing no good, did much harm. They all "kniebeled" their horses the whole year round, and instead of training, as they thought they were doing, they mistrained them, and no good came of their trouble and work; the squadron got poorly broken and poorly going horses; the men ceased to be practical riders, and their efficiency in the field was doubtful. After eight more years, what did you find? The two last annual contingents of remounts trained under the first system were still there and almost complete, while many were missing in the younger contingents. Many of the latter horses had died, many had been condemned as broken down; all were thick and fat, and quite awkward off the drill ground; the former lively gait and fresh appearance of the horses had disappeared; you could see lots of side paces, but the horses were not gaited.

H. It is obvious that a small number of remount riders can be rendered more proficient with less trouble than a large one, because the instructor can keep each one under closer observation; and that a small number, when picked from the ablest and most gifted riders, will learn better how to break horses than the great mass, no one will gainsay.

S. Add to this that a trainer of horses needs much practice in riding. Now, if such a trainer rides two or three horses daily, he gets more practice than if he rides one horse daily as the other men of the squadron do. It is only by much practice in riding that the pupils are trained to become thinking riders, are accustomed to familiarise themselves with the nature of the horse, to understand its mode of reasoning, to make learning easy for it, and not treat it as a machine, and above all

to be fair to the horse, *i.e.*, when differences occur, not to look to the horse for the cause, but to themselves in the first place.

H. What you are saying there, agrees with one of the chief principles laid down by Baucher. He stated that if a horse showed to-day some unexpected refractoriness, some mistake must surely have been made the day before. Major von Langenn, from whom I took riding lessons when I was a regimental commander, observed the same principle.

S. And to which any experienced rider will subscribe; whoever wants to become a good rider, to become a good horse trainer, must be always strict with himself and abstain from burning incense to himself. Whoever is incapable of this—it can be learned by practice only—is quick to punish the horse for every difference, including those in which the rider is at fault, which is generally the case, and perplexes him until he does not know what to do, rendering him all the more refractory and obstinate. If horse breaking is to be a practical success, it must never be done by bunglers or superintended by empirics pure and simple. If everyone be permitted to try his hand in horse training, including those already broken, it is not to be wondered at that horses die prematurely, become restive and unfit for cavalry service.

H. It is perfectly plain to me that if a small portion only of the men in the squadron are instructed in breaking and re-breaking horses, this small portion will be of more service than if all were continually required to ride according to the second part of the riding instructions. The question is whether this small number of trainers may not become too small?

S. How so?

H. I should think you would be limited in your choice to men in their third year of service, the four-year volunteers and the non-commissioned officers.

S. Why should not there be found among the riders in the second year of service men sufficiently gifted to be instructed in remount riding? The instructor, of course, should be a good practical rider and successful in imparting instruction.

H. They may be sufficiently gifted, but they must first, on broken horses, learn all the side paces which they are to teach the remounts as part of their training, and that cannot be done until after the first year of service.

S. It is quite true that the remount rider before mounting the remount should learn what his aim should be; that cannot be done by verbal instruction. He must learn by practice the feeling he ought to experience when the horse obeys his aids, and which he afterwards should strive to attain on his remount. The conception of what this feeling is he can get only on a well-trained horse. It is only when he has practically experienced what this feeling is that he can know what to strive for with his remount, and no one is fit for remount riding who does not know what he wants.

H. That is obvious. Now, if a beginner, just through his recruit year and ignorant of the requisite preparatory means and aids, be charged with riding a young, raw animal, he will be stumped, because he knows those aids only with which he has heretofore done campaign riding on a well-broken horse. Consequently, the horse will know still less than the rider himself what the latter wants, and fail to understand those aids which are not natural products, but, in great part, of an artificial character; for this reason I think that before a recruit rides a remount he should have another year's training, during which, mounted on a well-broken horse, he is instructed in training.

S. That is not at all necessary; he need not train during another year and spoil old trained horses, as is now often the case. It is sufficient to teach him on old, well-trained horses, which at once do what the instructor wishes to demonstrate, the use of the preparatory aids requisite in horse-breaking, and to let him feel the effect; that does not require a year's training. The riding instructions say expressly that during the recruit course the most gifted riders should be given lively, well-trained horses, and be carefully taught by a good instructor. During the summer whenever other duties permit, the training of the men must be extended, and they should be instructed in the lessons of the second part of the riding instructions. Here the horse must also be instructor if the rider is to learn to understand.

H. I understand you now; will you please tell me what changes you would like to have made in the present methods of training young horses?

S. Before I do so, I must refer to a very important instruction for the trainers which frequently, nay, mostly, fails to receive the necessary attention. The horse is by nature distrustful and unforgiving, and once ill-treated does not forget it for a long time; hence, its action in the stable and under the rider, always corresponds to the good or bad usage it receives. The better bred the horse is, the more prominent is this characteristic. To the cart horse it is a matter of indifference when his oats are poured into the crib under a storm of brutal curses; not so to the well-bred horse; the more gently it is treated by the groom the better it will thrive on its food, the more efficient and faithful will it be.

H. It is obvious that a horse rendered distrustful by rude treatment in the stable will be distrustful of the rider.

S. Difficulties are thus often thrown in the way of training by rude and injudicious usage in the stable; we often wonder why a horse is suddenly tricky and refractory, traits it had not displayed heretofore. Had the groom been under constant observation, the cause would not be hard to find, for he certainly beat the horse rudely in the stable or used it ill in some way, for which it now revenges itself. Add to this that men who are rude in caring for their horses, are habitually so in riding them, and thus greatly impair the efficiency of the horses.

H. I think all riding and service instructions lay the greatest stress on the proper management of the horse in the stable.



S. These instructions are, in practice, not observed with sufficient strictness; greater importance should be attached to the mutual effect of usage in the stable and riding lesson than is ordinarily the case; the best way would be to let the man who is training the horse be the only one to care for it.

H. That is not always practicable, least of all with remounts whose riders are, in part, non-commissioned officers, still less when you have a small number of trainers most of whom ride two horses.

S. It is certainly not always practicable, but we should endeavour to have the care in the stable go hand in hand with the riding. Where the supervision of the stable and riding are confided to one person, better results are reached than where the trainer simply mounts the horse ready saddled, and to which he is a stranger.

H. I believe that in this particular many officers sin most as regards their own horses, for they do not see them until ready to mount, and do not see them again after dismounting; many an officer visits his stable but rarely.

S. It is to be regretted that such is the case. As to the selection of the rider to be employed in training, I meant to mention that the recruits should be very carefully instructed and supervised in the treatment of the horse in the stable. In selecting the trainers as much stress should be laid on their address in managing the horse in the stable, in understanding its way of reasoning, in gaining its confidence, as on their horsemanship.

H. We have now exhausted the principles that should govern in the selection of remount riders.

S. I cannot express myself fully enough on this subject, and must mention at least a few chief points which properly pertain to the training of the recruit, but for this very reason should also be observed in the selection of recruits for remount riding in the second year. In the first place, the remount rider should have received his first lesson in riding on a well-broken horse, as has been stated above. The feeling of the complete subordination of the horse under the rider's will, its quick readiness, the free and unconstrained action, the easy feeling of the reins, the balance of the horse, everything that makes riding on a well-trained horse so pleasant, is impressed on the rider, and he endeavours to obtain the same feeling on the horse he is to train; he knows what he wants and is required to attain, for the first requisite of the remount rider is, as we have agreed, that he knows what he wants, so that when the horse does what he requires it to do, he leaves it alone and thus rewards it. The better, therefore, the horses of a squadron are broken, the easier is the selection of remount riders and the easier can they be trained. The recruits under instruction should, therefore, be mounted on the best trained horses with the liveliest paces.

H. It is a universally acknowledged principle, which we also have enunciated, that the horse is training the rider as much as the rider the horse. How, for instance, could a rider get an idea of the proper feeling he ought to experience in his hand, if from the beginning he is put on a

stiff-necked horse, which pulls with all its weight on the reins? He will become accustomed to hanging on to the reins and acquiring all the resulting errors in seat and feeling.

S. This principle is frequently acknowledged and proclaimed, and yet it is only too often violated. Sometimes the best trained horses are considered too good for recruits, and turned over to the best riders, with a view of putting sand in the inspector's eyes at the inspection in the school by tricks performed by a picked class. Next; the pupils selected for remount riding must have a correct seat. Once correct and firm in his seat, he has no difficulty in applying the proper aids. If he sits neither correctly nor firmly, the many unexpected motions of the remount will cause him to involuntarily apply aids by thigh and rein, which in turn irritate the horse. The consciousness of a firm seat gives him self-confidence and courage. The feeling of sitting neither correctly nor firmly makes the rider uneasy. But any one who is uneasy cannot break remounts.

H. Certainly; the horse knows at once when the rider is timid, and then plays with him.

S. The riding instructions contain precise instructions as to the correct seat, wherein all the best authorities on the art of riding concur. In practice the mistake is frequently made by the instructor of following the letter of the riding instructions rather than their meaning. They work according to a set scheme without considering that not all men are equally favourably built, and that some men need more time to acquire a correct seat than others. If, then, in the course of instruction, all are uniformly advanced, the instructor spoils those for ever who have not yet acquired the correct seat.

H. The firm seat is not a *sine quâ non* condition for properly managing a horse. I have known two riders whose horses always went splendidly, and yet they were thrown frequently.

S. There is a difference between a firm seat and a good seat. A rider may sit firmly and have sufficient strength to cling to the saddle by the strength of his thighs, whatever the capers of the horse may be; but he sits stiffly, annoys the horse, deranges his seat by means of the reins, shifts the pressure of his buttocks when giving a thigh aid, and thus gives unintended and therefore wrong aids by his weight. Such a rider can ride boldly, cannot be bucked off, but cannot guide correctly, and is unfit for remount riding. Another rider has a firm, supple seat; his limbs act on the horse independently of each other, and exactly according to his will, but he has not the strength of thigh to keep the saddle at unexpected motions of the horse.

H. According to this, the rider who is to be trained for remount riding should have both a firm and a good seat.

S. Exactly; he should have acquired his seat in his first riding lessons; confirmed and assured it during his first year of service in all the exercises of campaign riding, jumping, climbing, "tummeln," etc., and above all, in the long gallop, which is the best of instructors. I have

frequently heard some rider criticised: "He has a good hand, but no seat." That is sheer nonsense. How can a rider guide well if he does not have a steady, unconstrained seat, and if he allows the management of the reins to influence his seat? Whoever guides well, sits well.

H. That does not mean that whoever sits well, guides well.

S. Not at all; the good seat is merely the first stage. The next is the guiding. A rider may guide splendidly, and yet his hand may be rude in guiding. He must learn correct guiding after learning how to sit; a good, soft hand is a natural gift, like the soft touch of the piano player. Only that rider whose hand, as the riding instructions express it, has become steady, soft and sensitive should be selected for remount riding.

H. The hand cannot be all that unless it be independent of the seat, and the seat independent of the hand.

S. You are quite right. At the same time the rider should have complete control of his body; he must be conscious of what he is doing with every one of his limbs, and be able to move them each by itself and use them at pleasure, without affecting the other members, and making motions not intended, *i.e.*, giving wrong aids. As long as he cannot do that, a proper action upon the horse, as well as the absolutely necessary concert of thought with the horse, is wholly impossible.

H. In order to acquire such mastery over the members of the body in detail on horseback, Langenn recommended setting-up exercises on horseback.

S. They are the only correct means to this end. Reserving to myself the privilege of again referring to this point when we discuss the training of the recruit, I will speak to-day only of the manner in which one may convince oneself that a rider possesses the control, indispensable to the remount rider, over the individual parts of his body. I recommend the following method: The rider is placed on a broken horse, and you stand facing him where you can survey him with one glance. Direct him now to move one leg or swing one of his arms, and observe whether the other leg, the other arm, or the rest of the body, remains immovable, or is moved or strained. Then approach, lay your hand flat under the leg or arm which is not to move. There you will be sure to feel whether or not there is any straining. You may also place your hand on the rider's bridle-hand to convince yourself whether he holds it steady when giving aids with the thigh, or moving the right arm, and does not cause any feeling in the horse's mouth—a fault easily committed. For it is clear that a rider cannot be expected to act correctly upon the horse until he is complete master of his own body, his arms and legs. As long as he is unable to give aids at will with one hand, with one thigh, to work where necessary without moving the other members or straining the body, he is not fit for remount riding.

H. That is so plain as to require no proof.

S. Yet it is so frequently disregarded that I have not considered it superfluous to call attention to it again and again.

H. But this is not all. The prospective remount rider should be

teers, three, and in the last year can be put on horses whose conformation renders training particularly difficult.

H. Would you have a special examination for the purpose of selecting remount riders?

S. Or an inspection? For heaven's sake, no! That would create a special class "drilled for inspection." No; the recruit year is long enough to accurately know each rider, if the riding instructor, and particularly the squadron leader, shows great interest in each individual man.

H. We have spent our time to-day on the subject of the selection of remount riders. I must defer any further question on the training of the horse till our next meeting.

S. But our time was not lost, for you must admit that the selection of the right remount riders is the most important part of the training. How could you expect remounts to be well broken by men who cannot do it?

H. There you are right.

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#### TENTH CONVERSATION. (MARCH 21ST, 1886.)

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### OF THE PREPARATORY AIDS AND OF THE PREPARATION FOR THE TRAINING PROPER OF THE REMOUNTS.

H. Please tell me to-day what changes you would like to have made in the system of training remounts as now generally practised.

S. I shall have to begin with what I deem objectionable in our present method.

H. As yet the cavalry has but one gospel to follow, and that is the riding instructions.

S. The riding instructions are the result of the most profound deliberations of the most experienced riders. But, as I stated once before, they are written for good horsemen and can be understood by them only. They find it a good guide. A defective horseman, be he pupil or instructor, could not see it at all. The fact that this is the case is the root of many sins.

H. In what do these sins committed in remount riding consist?

S. An instructor, for instance, takes in hand the second part, and following its letter, goes through the lessons by the day and hour as laid down, without paying any attention whether or not there is any mutual understanding between horse and rider.

H. Yet the introduction, and I might almost say every line of the riding instructions, contain a warning against undue haste in the progression of the training.

S. Yet you may observe in almost any riding squad, that side paces for instance are being practised, although the horses do not yet understand aids by thigh or rein; and almost throughout too little regard is paid to the state of the horse's strength. A horse which still staggers unsteadily under the rider, which pulls heavily or fails to come up to the bit, which draws itself together timidly and stiffens when feeling the leg, is as yet incapable of going side paces—it is not ripe for them. If they are nevertheless demanded, the inevitable consequences are refractoriness, faulty positions of the neck, shifting of parts of the body, faulty paces, in short, defects of all kinds, which even the most skilful horseman hardly ever succeeds in eradicating. The many pacers in our squadrons are the result of premature demands on the horses.

H. It is true, if the aids mentioned in the riding instructions, pages 34 to 40, from switch to dumb jockey, were applied at once, we would soon be bankrupt, and ruin the horse.

S. What you are laying down here as the extreme, applies in a less degree to any, even the smallest progression in the exercises. For what are "aids"? The conventional language of the rider to the horse. The young animal must learn to understand this language before it can yield obedience. It does not know from its own knowledge, for instance, that it is to go forward when feeling the leg, that it is to go to the right or left when the right or left rein is pulled. It must be instructed in this language. This instruction in the language is accomplished by means of the preparatory aids.

H. The riding instructions allude to them on the first two pages of the second part and on pages 55 and 63, before treating of the training proper of the remounts.

S. These preparatory aids are alluded to and mentioned in the books on riding and in the riding instructions, but nowhere are they fully treated. For it is assumed as a matter of course, that for breaking and training, men are selected who are horsemen. The proper cavalry spirit makes them understand that at the beginning they must "work from the block," as the saying is, and that the crude horses are not able to understand the aids laid down in the regulations, and must be prepared for them by natural aids.

H. I should say the manner is distinctly laid down in the riding instructions how to accustom the horse to saddle and bridle, and how it is to be led by hand first without, and afterwards with rider, by another on an old horse.

S. In comparison with what is there called the training proper of the remount, the instructions are very short, simply because the supposition is that the riding instructions will be studied by those only who know something about it. Now if any one falling short of this assumption reads the few (8-9) pages which in the introduction and in the chapter on the breaking of the remounts treat of this subject, and then the more than 200 pages on the training proper, he might conceive the notion that he could not go through all of the task of training, if he should spend

more than a few days on the preliminary lessons. He will begin the training proper much too soon and apply aids which the luckless animal is as yet unable to understand and by which it is fretted into obstinacy, and demand from it exercises of which, in view of its bodily development, it is not as yet capable. For we should never lose sight of the fact that, while undergoing their training the animals are still in the stage of development, the muscles are becoming firm, the sinews strong, and the bony frame is hardening. Whoever, disregarding this, begins the training proper too soon, will ruin the horse.

H. You mean it would be the same as though a gymnast were to ruin a child if he were to begin its training with the somersault.

S. Approximately so. Add to this that the rider who, by the preparatory aids, working "from the block," has learned to control the unbroken horse, is much better able to ride such a horse into some shape. Soon after the first few collisions with the enemy in war we receive a supply of unbroken horses. Now if we have no riders who by means of the preparatory aids can reduce them to some kind of obedience, we cannot use these horses at all.

H. You seem to include the greater part of the aids among the preparatory ones.

S. Only apparently so. An example will better show the difference. When for instance you want to turn an untrained, and perhaps at the same time stiff-necked horse, to the right, you pull the right rein in the direction of the horse's right hip, leaving the left rein loose, until the horse yields to the pull and turns the fore hand in the new direction. Now compare this aid with the one prescribed for turning a broken horse. With the screw-like motion of the inner hand toward the rider's outer shoulder, with the supporting action of the outer rein, you would simply make an unbroken horse obstreperous.

H. In his "Chance Ideas" ("Zusammengewürfelte Gedanken") von Rosenberg derides the screw-like motion of the inner fist even with trained horses. He says no rider ever turns a horse with any but the outer rein.

S. Such utterances of an expert rider are as apt to be misunderstood by non-expert riders, as the riding instructions are too frequently misinterpreted by instructors not complete masters of their profession. That in turning the horse its nose is first given the right position by means of the inner rein before the horse is pulled around with the other rein, is so much a matter of course to Rosenberg, intimately familiar with the horse's nature as he is, that he does it without thinking, just as we masticate the meat before we swallow it, and that he does not think it at all necessary to speak of it. He presupposes it as a matter of course, as do the riding instructions in many cases. You may also read in Bally's work, how even the jockeys in the race, just before the turn pull the horse's nose inward, thus indicating that the turn is to be in that direction. Afterward they pull the horse around by the outer rein. Upon the pull of the right rein the horse naturally follows to the right, upon that of the left, to the



left. It is for this reason that we begin with the bridoon and the divided reins. The turning with the curb, as taught later in accord with the regulations, is of a conventional nature.

H. Referring again to the turning by means of the preparatory aids, I would like to say that it produces quite a different kind of turning movement from that executed by the broken horse.

S. Quite so. The hind hand lurches outward, because it has not as yet the faculty of bending. Of this failing of the croup the rider must take advantage, to make the horse acquainted with the aids of the leg; for as soon as it shows a tendency to give way toward the outer side, in consequence of the pull of the rein, the tendency should be assisted by touching it with the inner thigh and the switch. The horse will thus rapidly learn to obey the pressure of the thigh, since the pressure is exerted in the direction in which it is about to give way itself with the croup. Hence it will yield willing and ready obedience, and learn the thigh aids playfully. Such simple manipulations produce an understanding between rider and horse, and render the latter willing to learn the regulation aids and the later lessons almost unconsciously, without coming in opposition to the rider. That this tends to save horseflesh is clear. The prescribed proceedings should at first be made at a walk and trot, for from the very beginning it should ever be kept in view to apply the lessons while riding forward, in order that the ultimate object, the riding, the gaining of ground to the front, may not be lost sight of. Avoid, by all means, the "kniebeln" and training backward. The riding should invariably be to the front. Any holding back at the beginning is an error. Whoever cannot sit the merry high jump of the young horse without pulling him down or losing his seat, has no place on a remount horse.

H. What you are saying of the aids by rein is also referred to in the riding instructions.

S. Very true! But it is merely alluded to because it is not part of the training proper mainly treated in the instructions, being merely preparatory thereto. Most riders and instructors allow themselves to be induced by the succeeding sentence to pass prematurely to the handling of the reins as prescribed in the first part of the riding instructions. This sentence reads: "If the horse gains in intelligence and obeys the rider's aids, the hands should more and more observe the prescribed position."

H. But the riding instructions constantly warn against too rapid a progress of the training, and especially so in the breaking of remounts.

S. You find this warning on every page, and yet it is this warning that is most frequently disregarded. Thus in the handling of the reins on raw horses. There the right hand should remain on the right side of the horse, the left on the left; the rider should keep his hands far apart and make long pulls. A pulling over toward the other side of the horse, as in the bending of the horse after some progress has been made, should not be permitted on raw animals under any circumstances. The horse not being able to turn properly, the oblique pull will twist its

head, the nose pointing inward, the ears outward. As already stated, the pull of the rein for turning should be in the direction of the horse's inner hip, under total disregard of the outer rein. The question is to give the horse's head the direction in which you want to ride. That much gained, you drive the horse forward and lead it between the two reins.

H. All remount riders insist that at first the hands should be held low. This is not mentioned in the riding instructions.

S. It is likewise one of the preparatory aids with which the instructions do not concern themselves. Of course the position of the hands should be low as required, under some circumstances alongside the horse's shoulders. A high position of the hands frets the horse and interferes with the gait, especially in riding forward at a walk. A high position of the hands is therefore totally wrong.

H. The Silesian Hussar Regiment, No. 6, had the remounts during their entire first year ridden with blanket only in order to facilitate a low position of the rider's hands. The stirrups were attached to a surcingle constructed for this purpose and provided with a bridge to prevent sore backs.

S. I like that.

H. From the very beginning the horses went better. But in changing to the saddle some difficulties were encountered due to the ensuing higher position of the hand.

S. It would seem then that the horses should be ridden on the blanket with stirrups only as long as the lowest position of the hands is necessary. I cannot refrain, however, from inviting your attention to the fact that riding on the blanket fatigues the horse's spine more quickly, because on a well-fitting saddle the burden is borne with less discomfort. At any rate a low position of the hands at the beginning is indispensable. This does not preclude that as an expedient both or one or the other may be raised. High position of the hands is frequently recommended to prevent buck jumps, which, however, has the very opposite result. When the horse does jump once, be it from its feeling fresh or inconvenienced, it cannot jump forward if the position of the hands is high; it can jump on the spot only, and must buck, which in turn gives rise to various bad habits.

H. This is entirely in accord with the method of my riding instructor Langenn. Under his direction I rode a raw horse with a roach back, and a vehement bucker. As long as he bucked I was instructed to hold the reins low.

S. Langenn was entirely right.

H. But it was rather difficult to keep in the saddle.

S. The seat, it is true, is the *conditio sine qua non* for all riding. In the absence of the correct seat an independent, opportune action of the reins is impossible. I am constantly reverting to that, and would like to speak of it every five minutes. Hence, with a raw horse, the natural, unconstrained seat is the first requisite of the rider. He should sit confidently, conform to the horse's motions, never interfere with or retard

them. The better he conforms, the better the young animal will go forward, the less it will find cause for ill-humour and opposition.

H. It may be quite a long time before the change to the regulation method of the handling of the reins can take place.

S. It cannot take place until the horse understands the correct action of the reins. When, with reins held low and far apart, the horse has learned to go forward and, as very correctly stated in the riding instructions, begins to seek support from the hand, it is time to bring the hands closer together. The pull of the reins is regulated by the progress of the horse's understanding for the aids by rein, very gradually, however, rather more toward the middle of the rider, and finally toward his outer breast. If the horse fails to respond to such a pull, it is a proof that it was premature, and the primitive method should be at once resumed. It should be kept in view that the reason why a horse should respond with a turn to the prescribed screw-like upward and backward pull from the hand in high position, is because we have to hold the reins in the left and our weapons in the right hand. It is not at all natural that when the right rein is pulled upward and backward, the horse should turn to the right and, at the same time, move forward. The regulation method of handling the reins is therefore merely a conventional language which the young animal has to be taught before it can understand it. It is for the same reason the Wendish or Polish recruit fails to comprehend and respond to the nicest and plainest phrases, but does everything correctly if you address him in his own language. Thus at the beginning the horse should be addressed in its own language, *i.e.*, it should go in the direction given to its nose until it comprehends the conventional horse language. I cannot refrain from mentioning that the instructor should carefully avoid the use of turgid phrases and hippological terms hard to understand. Their use is but too frequent and calculated to increase the user's importance, who in his own mind often does not know himself what he is saying, while the men instructed do not get clear ideas, and become confused and stupid. It entails heavy penalties.

H. Nor do the effects of the leg aids differ from those of the reins. Nature does not prompt the horse to move forward when pressed from both sides. It would rather seek to avoid this squeezing by contracting itself.

S. The regulation forward-driving leg aids are the last ones a horse would understand without instruction. They are part and parcel of the conventional horse language. Nature would rather prompt the horse to evade the thigh, and I explained to you above that the best way to teach a horse the leg aids is in turning. The riding instructions prescribe the application of the leg vertically along the girth or four fingers in rear of it, and prohibit it in front of the girth or in rear of the flanks. The latter must by all means be avoided. It is apt to prompt the horse to opposition and to kicking at the rider's leg, particularly when tickled by the spurs. As the habit of kicking at the leg is hard

to break, anything that is apt to bring it on should be most carefully avoided. As a rule, especially with mares, it also brings on a habit of switching the tail, an unsightly and disagreeable habit, which disturbs and frets the neighbouring horses in ranks. Leg aids in front of the girth cannot always be avoided with raw horses, and are often to be recommended.

H. This interdiction is in the first part of the riding instructions, and therefore refers to recruits riding trained horses.

S. If the leg aid is given in front of the girth in the direction of the shoulder, in such a way as though the rider wanted to tap the horse lightly in rear of the shoulder blade with the ball of the big toe, the horse would be more apt to infer that it is to go forward than when the leg is applied at or close in rear of the girth.

H. The riding instructions recommend the leg aid in the beginning in the shape of light taps.

S. That is right, and as long as the horses are led by hand by another rider, they should be led forward when the leg aids are applied. In this way the horse will soon understand this language. Care should however, be taken not to tickle the horse with the spurs, which is apt to occur unintentionally with hay bellies such as the remounts usually bring with them. Instead of gaining in position, the horses will draw in and kick as already mentioned, particularly mares in heat.

H. It would be a misconstruction of the spirit of the riding instructions were we to emphasise leg aids to entirely raw remounts with the spur. You will not, however, be able to do entirely without some emphasis to the leg aids, particularly with lazy horses. I mean the cutting whip.

S. The whip is indispensable with any raw animal, and has found its place in the riding instructions. It acts as interpreter, so to speak. For as a colt the horse learned to obey the whip when being driven to the pasture or stable. It should be applied mainly to supplement the leg aids, because then the horse will learn so much sooner to understand them. It should be neither too long nor too flexible; the stiffer and firmer it is, the surer you will strike the point aimed at and the touch will not produce a tickling sensation.

H. You cannot employ the whip for the sole purpose of supplementing the action of the leg, as long as the spur is not to be employed to chastise the horse. You cannot get along without inflicting some punishment, though I am willing to admit that of ten chastisements administered to the horse by the rider, the latter should have been the recipient of nine.

S. Of course the whip is also to be used to punish the raw horse. For this very reason the rider should carefully practise the handling of the whip in order that he may not fret the horse with the reins, jerk them or make the horse timid. He should be able to wield the whip with equal skill with the right hand and with the left, upward or downward, without check in the handling of the reins, and to change it from one

hand to the other without scaring the horse. I cannot refrain from mentioning here the habit of many riders of carrying the whip under the left arm in order to make sure of a steady handling of the reins. But this is apt to make the left hand and arm stiff and awkward, which is essentially wrong with young horses. If the remount gives a jump, be it from meanness or because he is feeling his oats, the entire left side of the rider's body contracts and stiffens in order to hold on to the whip. The independent, unconstrained seat, which alone enables the rider to conform to the horse's motions, is interfered with and frequently changed into a one-sided constrained one. All riders with this habit strike you at once unfavourably by their one-sided seat. Contracting the left hip they pull up the left leg more or less, and incline to the right. This way of carrying the whip should therefore be suppressed on the part of remount riders.

H. I have often thought if it would not be advisable to use a dead weight in accustoming remounts to bear the burden of the rider? I never made the experiment myself, because I directed the riding of remounts during but one year, and that under the supervision of my chief, and could not, therefore, deviate from the method prescribed to me. Horses ticklish under the saddle are, with advantage, left to stand saddled in the stable under a dead weight before mounting them. Why not remounts likewise in order to accustom them to bearing the weight?

S. This idea is obvious, and I have made experiments in this direction. I have found, however, that the dead weight torments the horse much more than the living weight of the rider. Under a rider weighing 120 pounds a horse with weak back would bend with far less timidity than under a dead weight of forty pounds, especially when the rider possessed a soft and independent seat and conformed to the horse's motions. Besides, under a dead weight the horse merely learned to bear a burden, and not obedience to the rider. It was not long before I gave up the experiment.

H. The riding instructions, it is true, give explicit directions as to how to begin the breaking of the remounts while being led by riders on old horses, and how to prepare them for the training proper, and I believe these instructions are everywhere followed conscientiously. There was a time when the young remounts were entrusted for a whole year to the care of the first sergeant or an old non-commissioned officer. The officers did not concern themselves about them until they became "old remounts," and their training as such was taken in hand. The consequence was that many became worthless from the beginning, and the best time was lost during which the young animal should have been rendered obedient and its development assisted. That is different now. The youngest remount receives now, everywhere, so far as my observation goes, the very best of care.

S. That may be one of the reasons why, in this particular, the correct principles do not prevail everywhere. To-day the course of the young remount is frequently prematurely hastened, to the detriment

of its training and bodily development; frequently, also, the right way is not followed at the beginning.

H. Will you please state your objections in detail?

S. At the very beginning of the preparatory training of the raw remount, the first directions of the riding instructions is frequently violated. They describe, in unsurpassed manner, how the raw horse with natural gaits, when running free, moves with a natural balance, which is lost under the burden; how under the rider the horse should be given an opportunity and be assisted in regaining its balance in natural gaits. Any interference with these natural gaits by thigh or rein is expressly prohibited at the beginning.

H. This, I should say, is the aim of all instructors in remount riding.

S. Do you ever see a remount squad ride otherwise, even while the remounts under the rider are led by hand by the side of an old horse, than with a distance of two horses' lengths on the riding square, which barely exceeds the size of the riding track? Only one of all the remounts can thus go a natural gait, for there are no two horses whose natural gaits in walk or trot have the same cadence. All the other horses must therefore, either increase or decrease their natural gait; must therefore from the very beginning be interfered with by leg and rein; not one is allowed to go its natural gait. The assumption of a natural gait becomes an illusion if the distances are to be kept in the square.

H. It is for this reason that the riding instructions prescribe that a gait be sought which will enable all the horses to keep up without pushing them.

S. They will be able to keep up after a fashion, but still it will not be the natural pace of each individual horse. Though it be possible to find a gait which represents the average of all the fourteen or fifteen remounts, still one-half will have to be held back, the other half pushed in order to preserve the distances. This evil becomes most noticeable at a walk. Here a horse will trip and take to pacing; there another will have to be held back every few moments, which limits the free action of the shoulders when the horse has naturally a free step.

H. At the first beginning of the training period the riding instructions do not require a strict observance of the distances, to avoid overmuch interference with the horses and their balance and paces.

S. This is a remedy, it is true, but only a palliative one. Generally, in the end, all horses have to keep up, otherwise those of a more rapid gait crowd those in front, and the slower ones remain so far behind that they finally check the head of the whole squad.

H. Langenn, my instructor, forbade any change of pace, and cautioned to regulate the distance by rounding off the corners or following their lines more closely.

S. This is a very wise caution, in which I concur, as soon as the remount training has so far progressed that they will at all ride into a corner. With raw horses you cannot ride into corners, still less follow



their lines more closely. It requires a bending of the horse in a manner of which it is not as yet capable. It causes pain, and either induces obstinacy or hurts its development in the same way as the keeping of distances.

H. Yet the riding instructions lay down how the corners are to be passed with raw horses, that the observance of distances prepares horse and rider for the proper riding in ranks, and offers various advantages in the work on the horse, particularly inasmuch as the rider is compelled to use certain aids promptly to the desired degree, and repeatedly.

S. In order to utilise corners and distances for training purposes, a certain degree of training must have been reached. Any intelligent rider will tell you that. Besides, you seem to have overlooked that the riding instructions characterise the riding on the square in squads with distances as an evil for military riding, particularly with raw horses. This evil has to be put up with, and very many of the careful directions and cautions contained in the instructions, aim merely at avoiding or lessening the injurious consequences of this evil.

H. This caution should be carefully observed.

S. But they are superfluous if the riding with distances and the passing of corners can be dispensed with.

H. The riding instructions in the beginning prescribe in detail how to pass corners, even where the instructor should stand on the covered track as well as in the open.

S. But they do not prescribe that on the very first day an open or covered track should be used, and that this "necessary evil," where it can be avoided, be lugged in by force, as it were. We are touching a point here on which I lay great stress. The riding on the square (open or covered track) and with distances is generally begun prematurely with remounts, and overdone. We are aware of the great demands on the strength and patience of the young animal, already fully taxed with the bearing of the unfamiliar burden. It is much more correct to ride the remounts individually during the first few months after their arrival on the largest possible track, leading them first with old horses which conform in their gait to the natural pace of the young horse. The space cannot be too large, so as to require the fewest possible turns and allow of their being made as gradually as possible. In this way they stride more amply; it is only when they are going singly that they can go their natural gaits, seek and find the support of the reins and, without prejudice to their development and strength, learn to understand and obey the preparatory aids. During the first few months no more should be aimed at than a free and ample stride with long reins, and a lively trot. Nor does it do any harm if the horse gallop once in a while; nor should it then be held back under any circumstances. Accustomed by means of the preparatory aids to the application of thigh and whip, the horse is gradually, at the trot, driven up to the bit, and it will then while lightly bearing on the reins strive more and more to keep on a straight line. When the remount riders and their horses have once progressed so far that the

latter will and must go on a straight line at a lively, uniform stride and making a narrow trail, we can say that by far the greater part of the work is done.

H. How can a single instructor sufficiently supervise and instruct fifteen remount riders trotting around on a large track each by himself?

S. Probably not all will need strict supervision, if some of them have gone through the same work the year before. It is advisable to instruct a few non-commissioned officers particularly well fitted for riding, who, themselves mounted, caution the younger remount riders whenever their action is contrary to the instructions. The instructor himself should take them in hand one after the other. If it cannot be done otherwise, he should take the remounts to the track by details, until the squadron possesses a few experienced remount riders. He may also take one remount at a time, the others halting and practising mounting and dismounting, and familiarising themselves with the horses. As soon as he finds that this or that remount rider understands him, he may let him go with an accompanying rider on an old horse, and later on leave him to himself altogether.

H. You seem to be a great opponent of riding tracks, open as well as covered, and more particularly of the riding on the square with distances.

S. We are using the riding on the square and with distances in order to prove the example. As a means of training, in which character it is ordinarily used, I abhor it. If, for instance, after a while, I assemble my remounts on the square and let them trot around a few times, it can be seen at once which horses must be taught an ample stride, whose hind hand must be brought up more to the fore hand, etc. There the instructor sees and the rider feels in what direction more must be accomplished. The horses, once thoroughly broken to individual riding, must be able to go with absolute correctness on the track in the squad with distances without having been trained in this formation.

H. Riding on the square is more easily taught.

S. And more easily superintended, and this is the reason why it is in such favour; in this way much training and mistraining is done, for we do not thus gain the obedience of the individual horse; it is a mere senseless coaching for the inspection, confusing the conceptions of riding and cavalry training. In the times of Frederick the Great nothing was known of riding in squads with distances. It originated, it seems, in the Prussian cavalry toward the end of the last century from the custom of having the best riders on the best horses perform on certain days of the week at the giving out of the parole.

H. They were the parade hours mentioned by Marwitz.

S. Analogous to the productions in the riding schools, these riders rode artistic figures, quadrilles, etc., in squads with distances, in keeping with the custom prevailing during the first ten years after the peace of Basle, of toying with cavalry rather than keeping in view the stern demands of war as observed by the Great King. Riding in closed squads soon

found favour, especially with less talented riding instructors, because the horses learn with astonishing rapidity to go one in rear of the other and then show a certain degree of obedience and dirigibility through habit, even when the aids given are the very opposite to the correct ones.

H. There are horses which obey commands no matter what aids the rider may give.

S. Such training is not the proper one for the horse.

H. On the decennium of peace mentioned by you, there followed the decade from 1805 to 1815, so unfortunate for cavalry.

S. It consumed nearly all the riding instructors, which point we discussed on a former occasion. The few talented riding instructors who believed in riding in squads only, became now the recognised leaders. Add to this, that the cavalry had to be created anew, and on a large scale. The means employed became the training "*en bloc*" in the shape of riding in squads. The continuance of its existence is due alone to the long peace subsequent to 1815, for its only aim is the preparation, *i.e.*, coaching, of man and horse for the inspections in the school and on the track. When the horses were fat and shiny, the captains were lauded as splendid cavalymen. The historic origin of these productions on the square we discussed on a former occasion, but I must again revert to them to-day. No wonder that no one thought of war, but merely how to put sand in the eyes of the superiors at the inspections. I tell you there are to this day many cavalymen who have imbibed this system with their mother milk. They cannot free themselves from its doctrines; can no more imagine a cavalry without riding school tricks and riding school inspections, than training without distances in the squad. The latter, looked at in broad daylight, simply means to hitch the horse behind the waggon. A sound state of training of service horses does not consist in breaking them into poorly-going school horses by constant practice on small squares with distances, but in teaching them a good carriage and ample, free paces, balance and obedience. The less artificial lessons and other means are resorted to for this purpose, the more correct will be the bearing of the horses.

H. You are advocating the continuation of the riding instructions as the standard. Are you not in opposition to the same in thus abhorring riding on the square with distances, for which the riding instructions contain not only the most detailed regulations and illustrations, but which they have in mind on every page in laying down commands and explaining their execution?

S. I am not conscious of the least opposition. The riding instructions refer to the riding on the square with distances as a necessary evil, hence I am in accord with them in my desire of avoiding this evil wherever possible. In every stage of the remount training the riding instructions enjoin the practice of individual riding to the fullest possible extent, hence I am in accord with them in demanding that individual riding be practised almost exclusively whenever local and climatic circumstances permit, and that riding on the square be resorted to merely to "prove

the example." The riding instructions do not mention the square for the period of preparatory aids. The chapter on the "complete utilisation of the time during which the remount is being ridden by the side of the old horse," does not mention it, and leaves it to the instructor how to utilise this time. They do not say in so many words that individual riding alone should be used, but you can read this desire in every line, for it is prescribed that the individuality of each horse be constantly kept in mind, which is impossible with the training "*en bloc*." Exact regulations for commands and their execution are ever necessary when several soldiers under one command are to do a thing, and hence when the weather consigns the remounts to the school. On the contrary, in individual riding advice merely is given, instead of commands. Nor do I entirely disapprove of riding on the square. It should be resorted to in order to find out how this or that horse is to be corrected; in the further stage of the training it is to be resorted to at the time when the different paces are taught, in order to reach the uniformity of gait so necessary for cavalry horses, and lastly to prove the example in order to ascertain whether this has been gained. But while the horses are merely worked with preparatory aids, I would avoid any riding "*en bloc*," i.e., in the school or square, as much as possible. The season in which the remounts come to the regiment (July or August), gives us the opportunity for it.

H. I am willing to drop my objections against beginning the training of remounts with individual riding only. Is there any other direction in which, in your opinion, the intentions of the riding instructions are, at present, not generally interpreted correctly in the beginning of the remount training?

S. They are interpreted correctly, but not obeyed, and this in two directions, closely allied. In the first place, the remounts are not spared sufficiently; in the second place, there is, as a rule, too much demanded of them at too early a date. Our remounts, as now obtained, are very good, but two-thirds of them are not more than three-and-one-half years old, half colts, still in a state of development, and must be spared.

H. It is an advantage that the troops receive the remount not as yet fully developed, and are thus enabled to accustom it gradually to obedience toward man, and exercise it properly during the development of its strength in order to shape the structure in a manner most favourable for use as a saddle horse.

S. This is certainly an advantage, but it should not be misused, otherwise the remount is ruined by too rapid a progress. Any premature training should be eschewed and only such light work required of the remount as will not impair its strength, weaken its back and legs, or interfere with its development.

H. It is true many an instructor and rider is misled by the good-natured willingness of the weak animal into teaching it too much, thus injuring the sinews and gait.

S. This is because the conceptions of how to spare a horse are

not always clear. Every troop commander means to spare his remounts, but unfortunately he frequently does not spare them at all, because he cannot discriminate between what is good for the horse and what injurious.

H. Many mean to spare by giving the remounts days of rest.

S. Of that I will say nothing; it is strictly forbidden by the riding instructions. The riding instructor is sufficiently vexed every Monday morning with the spirit accumulated in the stable during Sunday, and I should prefer as a means of sparing the remount in the sense of the last-quoted part of the riding instructions to give it proper exercise on Sunday if permitted to do so. Many a troop commander thinks he is sparing the remount by not trotting or galloping it. But with a large track, a straight line and with favourable soil, this is pleasant and beneficial to the remounts. He makes them go at a walk to a senseless degree. In that way the remount is too much held up and tormented with thigh and rein. One would think it would be easiest for the young horse to receive the rider's weight at a standstill and carry it at a walk. But this is not so. While the back is still weak it is most disagreeable to the young animal to receive the burden at a standstill, because felt most in that way. The burden makes itself felt almost equally so at a walk, less at a trot or gallop.

H. Many instructors probably have the remounts much ridden at a walk in order to work out a good, uniform stride.

S. That is exactly the wrong way. A good stride is the most difficult part of the training. The training must not begin with that. It should begin with what is easy. A sensible amount of trot here and there is the best kind of preparation for a good stride. It follows that at the beginning the remounts should not be tormented by having them stand still after the rider mounts, but should be given an opportunity to move off at once.

H. That is not practicable when you have to lead out with distances in order to ride in the square, for in that case the last ones become the most fretful because standing still longest. I have always attributed this to spirit accumulated in the stable and to the desire of moving forward.

S. Very well. But why has the horse a desire to move in spite of the heavy burden? Because it feels the weight less painfully in motion than at a halt; because it is born and built to move, not to stand still. Nor should horses be allowed to move too long at a walk; they should shortly be made to trot; at a walk they should not be incommoded at all, but allowed to step out freely. If this is not done, obstinacy may easily be superinduced from weakness and pain, and the pace may be spoiled. The riders for the most part sin unconsciously in this direction by holding the reins too tight at a walk, from habit and absent-mindedness, in order not to lose control of the horse; they need the reins too much for confirming their own seat, and thus interfere with the stride. They hold fast instead of letting loose and driving forward. In this,

and in the premature lessons in side paces, is to be found the reason why there are so many horses that do not go clean paces. The riding of side paces, among which I class riding with position, should be carefully avoided in the time of the preparatory aids. If ridden prematurely, they effect the very opposite of what is wanted. They delay the full efficiency of the horse for service, because relapses in the bodily development are sure to result from the strain prematurely put on. These relapses delay the time when the horse is in possession of its full strength, if it ever gets over the premature strain.

H. A kind of side pace lesson is the passing of corners where the horse must bend, no matter whether it be right or not. If you consider that in a school with sides of fifty and twenty-five paces length, a horse must bend at the corner four times per minute at a walk and twelve times at a trot, it becomes clear that riding on open ground is less fatiguing than in the school.

S. In a small school the gait of the raw horse is spoiled at every corner. But the gait may also be spoiled on open ground, if you begin too early to hold back at a walk. In addition to the holding back, the driving forward, urging the horse on to the bit at a walk, is totally wrong in the first period of the training. It spoils the gait for good instead of regulating it. The pace is a stumbling block even for the most experienced, gentle rider; how much more for a remount rider with too hard a hand? The poor pace is not merely a defect of beauty. The pacer may be a good serviceable saddle horse, never a good cavalry mount. The moment he is to regulate his pace on the march by that of the other horses, he begins to rock, fatigues the rider, and the latter is apt to gall the back; while on a horse that marches well and has a correct, brisk gait, he remains fresh and rarely galls the back. I mention this with regard to the very beginning of the training. At this period the ultimate aim of producing the most efficient possible war material must never be lost sight of. This implies in the first place the greatest possible marching power of the squadron, *i.e.*, a correctly trained gait of each horse. The spoiling of the pace by pulling on the reins, by premature side paces, and all the faults formerly enumerated by me, also result from the fact that in the first weeks of his riding instruction feats were demanded from the remount rider by an ill-informed instructor, which require a certain degree of skill in riding. These things the remount rider has neither understood nor digested; they have taught him from the beginning to use the reins for confirming his seat. Thus are produced defects in seat and handling of the reins on the part of the recruit, and afterward in the remount's pace when entrusted to him later. All this results from the fact that the work of training the recruit was done with a view to the inspection; from the stencil work of coaching. Riders who control their horses with difficulty on the accustomed square and in the volts will not defeat the enemy; those with a confident, assured seat, and able to ride freely will do it. But *en avant!*

H. I fear that for the beginning we are speaking too much of the



walk, just as faulty trainers cultivate it too much at the beginning. Let us rather speak of the trot, which is the means for inculcating the correct pace.

S. The trot is certainly the gait best calculated for training the horse and should be used for this purpose. At the trot the horse drives forward and assists in bringing itself up to the bit. The trot should invariably be lively, thus preparing in time for the fast trot, which is indispensable for the thorough breaking of the horse. Then in the training proper any kind of trot must be ridden actively. The rider then endeavours to get the hind quarters to swing under, the fore quarters to come out high. It is excellent gymnastics for the horses, inculcating obedience and balance, two principal factors of the military mount. There is a sharp distinction between the trot used in breaking the horse and the one habitually used. The former cannot be ridden fast enough, while with the latter the question is to fatigue the horse as little as possible and yet gain ground.

H. Surely you would not require such a fast trot at the beginning of the remount's training?

S. Certainly not. The young horse should not at first be urged too much; it should be done gradually and in short lessons. In order not to be misunderstood, I ought to read to you twenty times those excellent portions of the riding instructions, where it is laid down how in the natural trot the horse should be allowed to seek the reins itself without feeling a sensible effect of the mouth-piece on the tongue. It is here where the greatest patience is necessary, that the gait be not decreased or increased until the horse understands the aid, and is able to obey it without detriment to its structure or development. Nor should the lessons in trot be too long at first, as is very properly emphasised in the riding instructions. After every lesson the young animals should be given the reins, and allowed full liberty on the track at a natural pace. Just observe how, after each lesson which has fatigued the horse, it will stretch its neck as soon as permitted. If it were not permitted to do so, the continuous pressure would cause pain, which renders the horse fretful, and incites it to be obstreperous.

H. Langenn, the riding instructor so often referred to by me, used to familiarise the horses with rein and thigh, after they had conceived some meaning of this language, by slightly drawing the reins at the natural trot without using the legs. When the horse was about to obey this aid, which was to be given very gently by moderating the pace, he would relax the reins gradually and apply the legs without the reins, and continue thus to alternate.

S. Care should be taken not to begin such work on the straight line until the horse at a natural pace has become as confident under the burden of the rider as it was in its free state without the rider, otherwise premature "kniebeln" will interfere with the pace and spoil it.

H. Langenn had the same thing done at a walk and halt. The quickest results from it I saw at a halt, by slightly drawing the reins and

taking off the leg. At first the horse would cringe back, giving the rider the feeling as though it was going to collapse behind. Then it would suddenly take the reins in a lubberly manner. If then these were gradually relaxed, and the horse was made much of, before replacing the legs cautiously in their normal position, the horse would take the reins the next time with confidence.

S. I am rather averse to work at a halt with raw horses. Our remount riders are not sufficiently experienced to run the risk of making horses restive. For this reason I prefer not to give any lessons at a halt until the horse has attained a certain degree of obedience while in motion. Forward is the horse's element. Forward be the parole, and the watch-word running throughout the entire training.

H. Then you would approve of the lesson referred to at a trot?

S. The gait can be increased and decreased at an early date without injuring the remount. It may even be a most beneficial lesson promoting balance and obedience when the remount has become accustomed to the rider's weight in the natural trot. But the instructor, and the one working by himself, should take care not to mistake the "shortened trot" for the trot with diminished cadence.

H. The shortened trot belongs to a much further advanced period of training than the one of which we are speaking.

S. Certainly; yet, unfortunately, both are frequently mistaken for each other. Trot with diminished cadence should not be begun until the horse possesses its full strength, for correctly ridden it is exceedingly fatiguing. Faultily ridden, it is harmful like any other faultily-taught lesson. To be beneficial it should be ridden very actively in very short cadence with little gain of ground, since it is intended that the horse should get the hind quarters well under and raise the front legs high. For this reason the horse cannot do it correctly until thoroughly bent in the neck. It acts mainly on the bend of the haunches and free movement of the shoulders; is properly a school pace, and should be used with great care for purposes of campaign riding. It should never be seen in squads of any size. There are horses which, in consequence of defective build, will never be able to do it correctly, a proof of the great exertion demanded. Hence better results are generally attained by the shortened medium trot.

H. Then it does not properly belong to our subject of to-day, the preparation for the training.

S. We have to treat it negatively there, for the trot with diminished cadence is much abused, and much harm done by its incorrect execution. Instead of beginning it as stated, when the horses have the necessary strength and preparation, many squadrons begin it at once, and in endless repetition carry it so far as to kill all feeling and all inclination to move. It is demanded of young riders, recruits still struggling with their seat, who have neither feeling in their hand or seat, nor an idea of how to let themselves go when the horse under them is to go a lesson correctly. They make themselves as stiff and rigid as possible and seek to gain by

force and sheer strength what can only result from harmony between a soft, steady handling of the reins and gentle leg aids. Instead of a correct short trot with high action and croup well pushed under, you behold a shuffling, sluggish pace, with stiff shoulders, rigid back, high croup, misplaced neck and head. Instructor and rider deceive themselves. The former fails to see, the latter to feel, that the horse is slipping from the rider's control by pushing forward the lower jaw and thus paralyzing all uncomfortable effects on the neck and body, for they are mistaking the shortened inactive motion forward for a correct, steady pace. Those only can ride and teach the shortened trot who know the feeling one has or should have, when riding the shortened trot on a correctly-broken horse. This applies to all lessons of the training proper. Yet we frequently see lessons produced (for the mere sake of going through them) and inspected, which are far beyond the capability of horse and rider, and therefore incorrectly executed. They produce the very opposite of what the military mount needs most, pace and balance. Hence it is better to omit them where they cannot be correctly executed, and I repeat, the great majority of instructors and riders will attain better results with the medium trot, increased or decreased, than with the shortened trot.

H. Once to-day you mentioned the gallop of the raw horse. Would you let the young remounts gallop in the preparatory state of the training?

S. With regard to the gallop, there exist widespread wrong ideas. You will mostly, nay, almost invariably, observe that rider and instructor consider it a capital crime when the horse once breaks from the trot into a gallop. Instead of driving such a horse forward to the reins and correcting it forward, the rider holds it back and attempts to correct it that way. This method is totally wrong under any circumstances, for it promotes the disobedience, or rather awkwardness of the horse, instead of removing it. When a horse bears correctly on the bit it must trot at the rider's will, for it must go the pace prescribed by him. What, then, may be the cause of the horse's breaking into gallop? 1. Its general weakness, inability to carry itself unaided; 2. Lack of obedience, *i.e.*, reluctance to go forward and feel the bit, meaning lack of confidence in the reins; 3. The horse's temper. The first case happens with particular frequency in riding in squads with distances. The horse cannot keep up, cannot control itself, and begins to gallop, especially at the corners. What harm is there in that? If driven forward by the driver on to the bit, which it should itself seek, and with which any sharp chuck should be carefully avoided, it will regain its balance, and settle back into a trot by itself. In the second case the rider only increases the horse's diffidence in the reins by making their effect more keenly felt. For any reluctance to go forward the only remedy lies in driving forward, which circumstances may require to be done forcibly and energetically. In the third case the horse's anxiety lest it fall behind, and its impatience by holding back; hence again it should be driven forward. Frequently all three cases take place, the second predominating, and the horse becoming excited.

Then it should be driven forward more than ever, without tormenting it with the reins. The motto of all military riding is "Forward."

H. These principles are no doubt adhered to by all intelligent instructors as the only proper ones. The dread of falling into a gallop and the anxiety of rapidly repassing into the trot, are principally due to the sharp reproof heaped on the rider of the broken horse in ranks for galloping instead of trotting, and thus causing unrest in front. What I would like to hear from you is whether you would like to see the gallop used purposely in the training of raw horses during the period of the preparatory aids?

S. Why not? It is entirely wrong to look upon the gallop as a gait requiring special preparation and presenting special difficulties. The horse likes it; you may see that by observing the colts on the pasture. The more blooded the young animal, the better it likes to gallop, the easier it finds this gait. There are horses to whom the gallop is naturally more pleasant and less fatiguing than the trot. Since in the training we should pass from the easy to the difficult, the gallop should preferably be used with such horses, to impart to them confidence in the reins.

H. There are some skilled riders who set up the principle that the trot should be developed from the gallop. The majority, however, proceed in the opposite way.

S. Both are right. It depends on the horses they are riding. The former, probably, have ridden none but blooded horses. The horse's nature should indicate which way to choose. There may also be horses which in the beginning should be ridden as much at a trot as at a gallop. Only, we should observe the same rules in galloping young horses as in trotting them, *i.e.*, we should be content at first when they go briskly forward at a free, natural gallop, suiting them. *Whether they gallop to the right or left makes no difference.*

H. That would about be the gallop which the trainer rides in training the two-year-old for the race.

S. Why should we not take the good wherever we find it? Of course the gallop contemplated here can only be a free, natural one, in ample space and on suitable soil. These obtaining, the gallop can only be beneficial to the young remount. I presume, as a matter of course, that distances be not kept, that the gallop be not continued too long, that the rider really knows how to gallop, *i.e.*, that he has a low and gentle seat, conforms to the motion, and does not need the reins for keeping his seat, though I am tempted to again lecture you on the seat in great detail, for if the rider stiffens himself he is apt to cause the animal more pain and injury in the gallop than in the trot. It is only when the horses have gained in strength and learned to work up to the bit at a gallop, head pointing straight to the front, that you may begin to require more of the hind quarters and pass on to a medium gallop. It is then that the training proper at a gallop begins. Riding the natural gallop in the squad, with distances, and in the school, should be deferred for a long time, even when you begin to work the hind hand under the horse.

The necessity of keeping distances and passing corners is apt to provoke rude aids, spoils the animal's delight in going, and injures its structure. A horse not as yet bent may be made lame by a single rude pull of the rein when passing a corner at the natural gallop.

H. Is there no danger of hurting the young animal by this trotting and galloping on large open riding tracks?

S. On the contrary; it saves the horse. Moving at will in natural gaits the horse is saved more than when, at a walk, it is forced through a corner every twenty-five or fifty paces; it must conform in this walk to that of the leader, and therefore is in constant conflict with the rider, and becomes excited.

H. Going the gallop, trot, walk, dismounting and leading by hand between times, how will you get along with the three-quarters of an hour or one hour allotted to remounts, when you are riding on a large track and unconsciously cover greater distances with each gait?

S. It is one of the advantages of riding on large riding tracks that you are not so limited in time as in the school where you have to make room for another squad when the clock strikes.

H. Still the riding instructions prescribe that one hour daily should be the longest, three-quarters of an hour the shortest lesson of the remount.

S. You have failed to notice the subsequent sentence reading "which are worked in the school." The free, natural gaits on the large riding track are not school work. One hour in the squad with distances and uniformity of gait in the school, at a walk and trot, is an enormous exertion for a raw horse, greater than three hours of natural gaits in the open, singly or led from an old horse which conforms to the pace of the young animal. Such exercise in the open may make the horse tired and hungry. It will lie down in the stable and relish its food. Next day it may not be so full of spirit, but will have a lively gait. An hour of "kniebeln" in the school may affect, though perhaps not tire it; it may get thick sinews and similar things, becomes excited over the conflict with the rider, perspires in the stable, looks around nervously and does not eat. Next day it still has spirit, mixed with obstinacy, and the resolution not again to put up with this tormenting. The fatigue and excitement then become greater and thus things go on until the horse declines. Many troop commanders then think they are saving the remount by prescribing more walk than gallop, or even giving days of rest for the horses to quiet down. But afterward they are only more spirited and obstreperous in the school. Here we come back to what I said before, that many instructors do not know what saving the horses means. On the pasture the colts run around in the open all day and yet save themselves.

H. That is true. For work in the school the riding instructions lay down one hour per day as the maximum. With much riding of this kind in the open the horses cannot help being healthier than when they merely exchange the air of the stable for that of the school.

S. And this is the great advantage of the method proposed by me,

which cannot be overestimated. I mentioned once before how sickness is averted by bringing the horses daily into the open air, and how disease is planted by confining them to the stable and school.

H. The influence on the health of the remounts is also different when, during their absence, the stable is thoroughly aired for two or three hours, and when it can only be done for three-quarters of an hour while they are in the school.

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### ELEVENTH CONVERSATION. (MARCH 28TH, 1886.)

#### OF THE TRAINING PROPER OF THE REMOUNTS.

H. What do you think is the best time for passing to the training proper of the remounts?

S. As soon as the remounts are gradually gaining strength, obey the preparatory aids, seek the bit confidently with head straight to the front, and retain the feeling of the bit in all the natural paces, trot, walk and gallop. Then you may begin to work the hind hand more.

H. Since the remounts are transported by rail, the regiments of most corps get them as early as July or August. The training proper can then begin by the first of October.

S. If I were to name a specified date, I should be contradicting myself in the case of every single horse, and violate all the principles of rational riding. In the first place, the horses are not born on the same day. The remounts are therefore not of the same age, nor in the same stage of bodily development. Some horses develop more rapidly than others. Differences of build require some horses to be worked in natural gaits longer than others. It is, therefore, impossible to state on what date to pass with a remount squad to the training proper, the date for each horse being different; we can only say when each individual horse is ripe for training.

H. That each individual requires different treatment is plain to any intelligent rider. But I should like to have your opinion at about what season of the year the average remount arriving with the regiment in July is sufficiently progressed, barring, of course, exceptions in individual cases.

S. I must decidedly decline to name any particular season, not even within the very widest limits. With each remount you begin the work of the hind hand, *i.e.*, the passing from the natural to the medium gait, the training proper, when the remount is ready for it. To recognise this time is the business of the judge, and, in our military training, of the instructor's eye and the rider's feeling, with which latter the instructor should come to an understanding by questioning him. Nor must you understand me as saying "To-day the training of this or that remount



begins," and that from this day on I put aside all natural gaits and preparatory aids. On the contrary, you believe the horse has sufficiently progressed. You attempt to bring the hind hand well under, to raise the fore hand, the nose held low. If unsuccessful you have warning that you were mistaken, and have to return at once to natural gaits and preparatory aids. With our good-natured horses, however, you will probably succeed at once. The danger for rider and horse lies in this, that the former, rejoicing over his success, will soon demand too much in quality as well as in quantity, i.e., he at once raises the fore hand too high, and urges the hind hand too much; rides in the first days too long at a time at gaits approaching the medium ones, and causes pain to the horse. During the succeeding days, the horse resists, having suffered pain, in the stable, becomes restive and loses its appetite. It is time then to return at once to the natural paces, and to make moderate demands only, for some days. A good, experienced rider who makes no mistakes, will teach a horse everything without worrying him. He never settles on a certain task for each day. The horse learns without noticing that it is doing anything unusual. Both horse and rider are unaware how it comes that all of a sudden the Gordian knot is undone.

H. My question as to the proper time for beginning, is prompted by the division into periods with which the second part of the riding instructions begins. There it is assumed that the first training of the remounts begins on October 1st, though, since they arrive so early, it might begin in July or August. I thought that you would proceed more slowly than the riding instructions, by beginning the training proper about October 1st.

S. It should not be forgotten that the average remount is a quarter of a year younger in July than in October, and less developed physically, and that less should be demanded of it. It is possible, of course, that sometimes a remount may have sufficiently progressed by October to allow of increasing and shortening of the gait. But this will certainly be the exception.

H. But you cannot delay long in the fall if, according to the division into periods you are to teach the medium trot, fast trot, volts with turning, etc.

S. Nothing has contributed so much to the gross misunderstanding of the entire meaning of the second part of the riding instructions as this division into periods with which this part begins. It is merely an illustration, not a regulation.

H. How can a riding instructor infer from the riding instructions what is meant as regulation and what as illustration?

S. From the entire sense of the riding instructions in harmony with the correct horseman's feeling. In the first place please note that the division into periods covers a space of eighteen months, and that the text refers to the fact that the remounts arrive as early as July or August, and that this time should be utilised. The division into periods ends with March of the second year. What troop commander with any sense would

place the old remount in ranks as thoroughly trained on the 1st of April? What regimental commander would allow that? A careful leader, with a knowledge of his horses, will select with great care a few of the old remounts and put them in the ranks if entirely developed, taking for the large summer exercises most of the remounts for parade merely, and saving and leaving behind those which need it. As long as we have the inspections at the end of the riding course, the question is how to guard the young animals from the preparations for the inspection. The inspector can do much in contenting himself with what the horse's strength and state of training permits, in not requiring work by pattern nor expecting to see every horse fully trained ready for the ranks. Thus the real time of training lasts two years instead of eighteen months, and with some horses two years and a quarter, followed by six months, within which the training of the horse can be supplemented.

H. Will it be possible to save many of the old remounts in summer when the squadron is required to turn out for the large summer exercises with a certain number of files?

S. There are many opportunities for saving the old remounts during the manœuvres. The quartermaster, or some men not riding in ranks, are put on them. It is preferable, however, to drill in peace time with a few blank files rather than to ruin the remounts. I should prefer not to turn out, before autumn, a single old remount for large fatiguing exercises in peace time.

H. Would you leave them in the garrison?

S. Certainly not. March and change of air will benefit them. It is only from severe exertions that I would guard them.

H. There you are clashing with Schmidt, who demands that every horse be turned out for the large divisional exercises, and says: "Those not in the ranks fail to take part in the fight." He wants the number of riders and files considered in deciding whether an attack was successful or not.

S. General von Schmidt was one of our greatest, perhaps the greatest, drill-master of recent times. He did great things in preparing and carrying out the peace exercises of great masses. His demands on the rider in war are justified throughout. But I cannot accept him as an authority on the individual training of man and horse in peace; he demands too much. As to the requirements of war, he is right. There it makes no difference if the horse fall by the bullet or from exhaustion, if only the object is gained; but when in peace time the highest demands are made on the horses before fully developed and obedient, they are ruined to no purpose. Schmidt, and still more those after him in the cavalry, who in part have failed to understand his methods, and seek to outdo him, break down half of the remounts. The horse may not show it during the progress of the drills, but will in the next few months or years. If you make these demands ten years in succession, you will have squadrons of which more than one-half of the horses are ruined, i.e., unfit for war.

H. A squadron of full peace strength can turn out for the summer

exercises with eleven files (among them two blank files); that is, eighty horses, not counting the old remounts, without which the squadron numbers 109 horses. Some of the old horses are going to go lame, or have to be spared for some other reason during the very fatiguing summer exercises; hence it would not be long before you will have to place some of the old remounts in ranks.

S. The more rationally and gently the remounts have been treated in the first two years, the better will they afterward withstand the fatigues of the manoeuvres, the smaller will be the number of old horses that fall out from lameness or other causes, and the smaller the probability of having to use some of the remounts of the current year. The more the horses while yet remounts are fatigued, the surer the foundation for their ruin is laid, the sooner they will in after years break down, become lame, etc. It is better, therefore, to turn out for the manoeuvres with a few blank files during a few years, than to ruin a single remount prematurely. It was war, however, that I had chiefly in mind. Would you rather take the field with a squadron with none but sound legs under its horses than with one of which half the horses are of doubtful efficiency in the field?

H. Do you mean to leave the old remounts at home if war should break out during the time demanded for training by you, for instance, in summer?

S. If up to that time I have spared them rationally, and turned them out in ranks occasionally only for exercise on days when the amount of work and the nature of the drill was not too much for them, I shall be able to use them in war to better purpose than if they have been turned out for all exercises, and have thus had the seed of ruin implanted in them.

H. I wish to revert once more to the division into periods. The riding instructions enjoin in every line a slow and gradual progression, and yet it seems to me as though by this division into periods so much is expected that no remount is able to accomplish it in the time allotted.

S. You may judge by this that a rigid adherence to this division into periods is not expected by the riding instructions. No intelligent rider will sacrifice a hair's breadth of the requirement—running like a red thread through the riding instructions—of a gradual progress in the training conforming to the physical development of the horse, for the mere purpose of fulfilling the letter of the division into periods. Adherence to the text of the riding instructions and their purport as a whole, which is in perfect accord with rational riding, should be the guide. Rigid adherence to the division into periods leads to the ruin of the horses. The procedure under the division into periods is, on the whole, correct, but would be modified so as to suit the case of each horse.

H. Still it seems to me there is much that is in opposition to your principles. If, for instance, in the first period, which, according to your principles, should for the most part be devoted to the mere preparation for the training proper as we discussed it the last time, passing of corners, changing corners across the school, circle and change, turning on the

fore hand, fast and medium trot, are to be practised, these requirements seem to me opposed to your principles.

S. Not at all. Passing corners and changing should be practised in the first period, if, as is assumed in the instructions, the "necessary evil" of school riding is unavoidable. Where this evil can be avoided, I need not suffer its resulting evil effects. Circle and change can soon be ridden, the only question being how. What else is the change of direction, under application of the inner leg for the purpose of familiarising the horse with that application of the leg which I recommend as preparatory aid, than part of a circle? The same exercise at a halt which I discussed at the same time, what is it but part of the turning on the fore hand? If you were to begin with a circle of six paces diameter and an entire turn on the fore hand, you would not have my approval, nor be acting in the sense of the riding instructions. With the fast and medium trot in the first period, it is the same. The riding instructions never contemplated thereby a perfect fast or medium trot, but merely an increasing and shortening of the gait, such as I require at the beginning of the training proper for working the hind hand. Only perfectly active horses are able to go a perfect fast and medium trot. Any good horseman knows that, and it is to them that the riding instructions are addressed.

H. All this admits of no controversy. But the hapless riding instructor is inspected at the end of the first, or at any rate, of the second or third period, and he is expected to show, and the horse to do, what is prescribed for these periods in the riding instructions.

S. Where in the riding instructions do you find it stated that an inspection should take place at the end of each period? These riding inspections at the ends of the periods are a disease with which our entire cavalry is afflicted. The superior arrives and demands on the 1st of January this, on the 1st of May that. What does the riding instructor do? He lulls his remount squad to sleep and has to go mechanically through the task prescribed for that period. Circles, etc., and subsequently side paces are produced, but how? The best natured horses, whose conformation offers the least difficulties, are placed in the lead and rear, for whatever happens in the middle is not so conspicuous. During the last month before the inspection the work is confined to reeling off daily the requirements of the inspection. This consumes half the time of the training, instead of utilising the entire time for making the horses effective for the field. Furthermore, the instructor, who has exhibited his horses at the end of one period, is apt to consider them so far progressed, that he passes on to the next, and no longer concerns himself with the more primitive exercises of the former period, which, in his mind, is a thing of the past; yet it is in the sense of the riding instructions, again and again to go back to the most primitive exercises when meeting with difficulties, which were considered surmounted because an error was made and the horse advanced too rapidly. The instructor cares in the first place to come out well at the inspection. What becomes of the remounts after leaving his hands concerns him little. So you see what leads to precipi-

tation in the training of the remounts is the inspection at the end of the periods; and not the division into periods, which is intended merely as an illustration and guide.

H. I think the evil could be removed if the riding inspections were properly managed, and, as proposed in my letters on cavalry, would take place, not at the end of the periods, but a few weeks before that time, giving the inferior time to remedy the defects pointed out to him.

S. That would merely lessen the evil. It must be rooted out entirely. Every final riding inspection is apt to lead to the belief, that the horse or rider is "made." But in a certain sense horse and rider are never "made," for they can always learn more, while, in another sense, the squadron is expected to be ready at all times. Of what use is a system of riding which can show its feats in April only, and forgets them again in the drill season? Of what use is a squadron which can have squadron drill only in May and June, target practice in July, regimental drill in August, and manœuvres in September? May not war break out at any season? Should not the squadron be able to drill at any time during the year? Why then the periodical inspections?

H. Without control, no achievement. As the inspection, so the work.

S. Very true. I take you at your word. As the inspection, so the work. For this very reason inspections should not take place at the end of certain periods fixed for each year, otherwise the exercises are so conducted that some performance can be exhibited at the final inspections. The inspections should be so made that the inferior will never know beforehand of the superior's coming. If the latter wants to inspect the riding of the remounts, he must not allow himself to be treated to a ballet, or a circus quadrille, but should be present during the instruction (whether during the first, second, fourth, eighth or ninth period of the riding instruction, is immaterial), and must insist with iron rigour, that no more be required of any remount than it is capable of, in view of its physical development and previous rational training. Thus the superior can exert an intelligent influence, and judge the inferior by his way of imparting instruction. That once done, you would see how the coaching for inspection will come to an end.

H. But you must fix on some date by which the remount must be ready to be placed in ranks.

S. No! No! The horse is placed in ranks when it has gained full strength and is broken to obedience. Or do you want me to say for instance, on this or that day the horse must be placed in ranks; by that day it must have gained full strength and be rendered obedient? From the words "full strength," you will perceive that I would be saying something wrong. Many riders forget that a horse's obedience and full strength stand in close reciprocal relation; that full strength is promoted by long, rational training; that precipitate training is apt to be harmful; that only such horses can be rendered thoroughly obedient as possess their full strength, because before the development is completed

they have weak points which, if disregarded, bring on obstinacy. The red thread running throughout the remount training, should be that the training of each individual horse be as slowly proceeded with as indicated by its previous exercises, conformation and development, and that it be not placed in the ranks for all kinds of service until it is fully developed and obedient.

H. Then you will not be able, as a rule, to place the old remounts in the ranks until after the great autumn manœuvres, and you will have a remount here and there which needs additional training during the following winter with the next younger class of remounts.

S. What harm is in that? As old horses they will remain serviceable all the longer, will be trained all the better; so much the better riders will be trained on them, because then the recruit will imbibe an all the better horseman feeling with the mother milk, so to speak.

H. It is not difficult to see that the training will be much more perfect, if no time is fixed by which the horses must be rendered active than when you are tied down to a certain time. Hereafter I will ask my question on the further training with as little reference as possible to the calendar. I should like to know next whether, when you begin to work the hind hand, you would also begin to bend the horse?

S. Nothing bends the horse better than the bringing up of the hind hand in the active medium trot. It prepares the bending throughout the horse's structure. Bending sideward should, however, not begin too soon. Many riders fall into this error. It "kniebels" the horse and deprives it of the confidence in the reins which has been imparted by a rational working of the hind hand. It will creep away from the reins.

H. You have already given warning that in beginning it there should be no attempt to bring the young horse forward on the hind hand at a walk. The chief working pace for this purpose is the trot.

S. And the gallop. I need not explain to you how in both these gaits the hind hand is brought under.

H. No! The course of training as outlined by you agrees too much with what my instructor Langenn also prescribed, to need much explanation. He increased the natural gait by driving forward with the leg and relaxing the reins gradually at the same time. When the horse then began to seek the reins, he made us endeavour to reduce the gait gently with the reins, gradually relaxing the leg pressure at the same time. As soon as the horse decreased its gait, it was again driven forward with the thighs, and the reins were relaxed. The aids thus given alternately by thigh and rein gradually approached each other. It required many days, weeks, even months, before thigh and rein could be applied simultaneously. This work on a straight course requires much patience, and frequently throws the rider into profuse perspiration. But when thigh and rein can once be applied simultaneously, the horse is placed "between thigh and bit," and the natural trot has been transformed into the medium trot before you know it.

S. I place much value on the gallop as a means of working the



hind hand. The gallop is a gait very sympathetic and natural to the horse. But those alone can properly work at the gallop who sit correctly, conform well to the motion, and do not need the reins for keeping their seat. For this reason I speak again and again of the seat. Many riders and instructors inwardly hate the gallop, especially the extended gallop, because they do not know how to ride it; because they lack the easy seat; because they do not let themselves go and allow the horse to move freely; because they come in conflict with the horse in this manner. They seek to make up by force for lack of adroitness in the saddle, interfere with the strides of the horse and cause pain, to which the horse responds by stiffening itself, staring and pulling on the reins. Such choking and fighting ruins the horse's body and character, and the riders think that it was the gallop that spoiled the horse, when, in fact, it was the manner in which they rode it. Cavalry must be able to gallop for manœuvring, charging, patrolling, and producing bold riders. Whoever cannot make a long gallop with an easy rein, is not a properly trained cavalryman, and can be given no voice on campaign riding. The long gallop is the rider's touchstone; the proof of the example cheers the heart, brings self-confidence, the feeling of invincibility, without which cavalry can do nothing. In riding the young horse at a gallop, its stride should be absolutely unimpeded. By increasing or shortening, a medium gait is reached, in which the work is the same as in the trot, consisting merely in increasing and decreasing the gait. The "short gallop," *i.e.*, the shortened gait at the gallop, should at first be as carefully avoided as the shortened gait in the trot. Both are school paces, and pertain to an entirely different period of the training.

H. Now I need not ask the next question I have had on my tongue, *i.e.*, when you would begin to bend the horse sideward, for from what you have said it appears that the time for it has not come until the hind hand is so far brought under, and the remount takes the reins so that the natural trot and gallop have gradually been transformed into a medium gait, which admits of being increased or decreased.

S. Yes, and the walk will then have become steady without it being necessary to torment the horse by bringing the hind hand under at a walk. The work on the straight course will also have bent the haunches to a certain extent, for the bringing up of the hind hand causes the same to be placed well under, and the weight to be shifted to the hind hand.

H. With what exercise do you begin the sideward bending?

S. Before speaking of that I should like to refer to some principles in biting and handling of the reins, which I see frequently violated, for irrespective of the impracticability of rational riding without correct biting handling of reins and biting are prime factors, especially with remounts at the beginning of their training.

H. The riding instructions and the works of Krane and Seidler are the most correct on this point, I should say.

S. The only correct ones. Yet they are frequently sinned against, because in riding young horses the rider is not sufficiently careful of himself

to see that the middle between the two reins and when riding on one hand, the bridle hand be exactly over the middle of the horse. This causes misunderstanding, precludes a proper "standing to the bit," control over the hind hand is lost, and one rein only, the wrong one, remains in operation. The rider should constantly feel both reins lightly, otherwise the proper action on the neck, obedience, is lost; head and neck are misplaced. Frequently horses go on one rein only, mostly the left one, as the result of faulty snaffle work, chiefly because the rider in using the curb habitually lets the bridle hand sag down on the left. This brings about a wrong bending of the neck to the left. You may observe this with most men of the squadron. It should be carefully looked out for, nor should the instructor allow his pupils to acquire this habit. It does not make so much difference in riding for pleasure, when the rider may use both hands as in horse breaking, as in drilling, when the soldier holds the weapon in his right hand. If the reins are removed from over the horse's middle the animal becomes confused, cannot be properly turned, etc. Again, the proper position of the reins is impossible without a correct seat. It brings about refractoriness, and if you are strict with yourself you admit that it is you who are in the wrong. Frequently the cause of the horse's leaning on the reins is that bendings and lessons are demanded for which the horse is not yet ripe. In addition, horses that take one rein only are more quickly used up, their legs suffer from one-sided use, not to mention a galled back from great exertions in the field, refusal of food, exhaustion, etc.

H. Much harm is done also by using an unduly long rein.

S. Chiefly because the rider is apt to take the reins too short, believing to have thus better control over the horse. That is an error. The horse familiarises itself more readily with reins of proper length, and seeks them, while it endeavours to get away from the short rein which hurts; for the rein, if too short: 1. Deprives the horse of the possibility of stepping out, of extending itself, of selecting the spot where to plant its feet. It deprives the horse from beginning of the initiative, renders it systematically unsteady, which will manifest itself later in riding on uneven ground. 2. With high paces, mouth and balance are lost. 3. The position, the rider's seat, are lost. He advances the hand, draws in his left side, and leans to the right. Result: Saddle galls on the left front and right rear. 4. It invites falling. When stumbling the horse seeks to save itself from falling by planting the fore legs and stretching the neck. Too short reins prevent the horse from doing so. The rider is at the same time pulled forward, and cannot, as he should, throw back the upper part of his body, and take his weight off the fore part of the horse. 5. The horses are thus prevented from looking out for themselves, become unsteady, stupid, and the riders become diffident and cowardly, for they lose the confidence in themselves and the horses.

H. The reins should, however, not be left loose too long at a time.

S. Of course not so long that the rider loses all action upon the horse. The fault of too short reins is the more frequent one.

H. It is a pity that there can be no fixed rule for the length of the reins.

S. The length of the reins depends on the length of the horse, the position of its head and neck. Nothing better could be said on this point than what is contained in the riding instructions.

H. There are many riders who seek to remedy the defects in the construction of the horse's neck by auxiliary reins.

S. Unfortunately, yes; it is carried so far, that the Anglomaniacs, particularly the awkward ones, cannot take a ride without a martingale. That expedient is useful only in breaking horses to the gallop for racing purposes, and under an excellent rider. For riding school work it is injurious, produces an oblique position of the head, a faulty bend of the neck, and accustoms the horse to pull with the head upward. For campaign riding the martingale should be discarded, for reasons: 1. If short in order to be effective, it impedes the free movement of the horse, especially in the high jump, and drags the stumbling horse down on the ground, and is therefore dangerous. 2. It takes away the lateral action of the reins. 3. It causes the horses to be bridled too high, and injures the fore hand. 4. Its correct use requires the use of both hands, while the soldier has but one hand available. 5. Bridling in case of alarm is delayed by the martingale, and the leading of a spare horse by the snaffle made impossible.

H. The use of the martingale was once recommended to me for a horse that had an inclination to the ewe neck when I bought it. It braced itself against the action of the martingale, and developed the ewe neck all the more.

S. I could have told you that at once. And yet the martingale has become the fashion.

H. In the division which I commanded there were infantry regiments among whose chargers more martingales could be seen than "jump reins" in a whole cavalry brigade of 1,400 horses.

S. I do not like the fixed "jump reins." They are frequently used against tossing of the head, and for confirming the position of the neck. They are injurious to the development of the paces, and of evil for man and horse. They fail of their purpose entirely. The position of the neck can be modeled over only by driving the hind hand forward against a soft but steady hand, never by strapping up the horse forcibly. The tossing of the head is usually the result of factory-like, senseless work. When the rider begins to drive up the hind hand, to bring the horse's head and body closer to the head, it is unavoidable that the constraint should cause discomfort and pain in the compressed muscles, particularly if the nether jaw is sharp, as in blooded horses which resent any constraint. If too much be demanded at once, if some relaxation is not allowed so that the poor animal may stretch and refresh the pinched muscles, it becomes exasperated and seeks relief in tossing its head. It is the rider's

fault, and if he apply force in the way of auxiliary reins, he adds to the obstreperousness of the horse.

H. In my limited practice I had an experience which proves the correctness of what you say. I rode a horse with a short roach back, and long, slender neck. It would vault its whole neck and spinal column like a fish, and when I happened to sit carelessly I was apt to receive a blow from the horse's head in my face that made my nose bleed. I asked the instructor's permission to use a "jump rein." He declined and demanded patience, seat, and a light hand. After much work and untold patience, the animal gained confidence. I rode it many years and in two campaigns, and never had a nimbler, more comfortable or agreeable horse without "jump reins." For this reason I have always been opposed to the "jump rein." In the hussar regiment of my division there was but one. All officers, however, who knew that horse, even the greatest opponents of this instrument, including Colonel Kaehler of the regiment, declared the "jump rein" indispensable in this case. The horse would throw the head back obliquely and, in the absence of the "jump rein," run madly away. Many a rider had been injured by it. When it felt a "jump rein," that made this manœuvre impossible, and its behaviour was exemplary.

S. You see how smart horses are! Had you been able, however, to follow the training of that horse from the beginning, you would have observed that the animal acquired the bad habit artificially in one way or another, and that correct treatment would have precluded the habit. For this reason I object to any kind of auxiliary reins in the training of remounts.

H. Have we the right to reject those auxiliary reins, which are enumerated in that part of our gospel, our riding instructions, which treats of the training of the remount? There we read: "Bearing-rein, cavesson, dumb jockey."

S. All works on riding, and foremost among them our riding instructions, are agreed that auxiliary reins require particularly good riders, and are dangerous instruments, which, in most cases, do more harm than good, and are not to be used by riders whose skill is doubtful and understanding defective. That is the case with all remount riders of our squadrons. However thorough the instructor's knowledge, and however great his experience, he cannot supervise every pull of the rein of his dozen of pupils or prevent faulty ones. Auxiliary reins whose action is lever-like and twice as strong as that of the simple snaffle, double the faults. Imperfect riders mean to force the horse with the help of auxiliary reins. They believe themselves at first to be successful, but the horse deceives them, and they deceive themselves. The giving way sideward of the upper part of the jaw and the croup and dropping of the neck, they mistake for a proper yielding, and fail to notice that the horse is creeping behind the bit. Confirmed in this idea, they mean to reduce the poor animal to obedience by forcible means. They mean to attain forcibly, without effort, and at once, what can be the result only of gradual and progressive exercise in bending and rendering the horse supple with the help of aids

and lessons intelligently applied. Impatience, lack of skill and understanding, and personal comfort, make auxiliary reins an instrument of torture. There are good-natured horses which stand this cruelty, and finally go in one way or another. Impure paces and excessive work are the result, and the poor rider does not know that he is condemning himself in saying, "The horse goes side paces," or "runs away," or "is already broken down." Many young horses are prematurely condemned, and old, used-up, dull horses have to be retained one or more years after they have ceased to be serviceable. The best auxiliary rein is the steadily driving thigh.

H. Would you also prohibit the use of the auxiliary rein in the squadron for retraining of horses?

S. There are probably one or two riders in each squadron who have made sufficient progress in riding to apply auxiliary reins intelligently. The less, however, auxiliary reins are used in the first training, and the more rationally the training is carried on, the fewer will be the horses which require retraining with the help of auxiliary reins. In the squad they should never be permitted. All works on riding assume that in the training, and particularly in the use of auxiliary reins, the rider rides by himself, and can devote himself exclusively to his horse. That is impracticable if he is to pay attention to distances, other horses and commands.

H. The same may be said of too sharp a curb.

S. There are excellent riders who can ride with the sharpest bit, because they are skilful enough to ride lightly and gently in spite of the curb. In school riding, *i.e.*, the old high school, the curb is used, and applied, like all auxiliary reins, with understanding and care. Exceptionally good riders can ride with the sharp curb in the open and before the front, not, however, in ranks. For purposes of campaign riding we cannot caution too much against sharp bridling, *i.e.*, too long a pull, too tight a curb strap. It is unnecessary to state that the snaffle incorrectly placed, either too high or too low, ill fitting, too wide or narrow, torments the horse. As with all auxiliary reins, so I am equally opposed to all extraordinary kinds of bits and biting, with which so many riders torment their horses.

H. The riding instructions mention among the auxiliary reins, the "training halter." Do you reject that also? Langenn had every remount bridled, in the beginning, with a kind of riding halter, *i.e.*, with the snaffle with nose strap.

S. I am in favour of this one auxiliary rein. I did not think of this before, for, during the greater part of my service, the nose strap was part of the equipment. It is exceedingly difficult to break a horse without nose band, and requires particularly fine touch. If the horse is able to open its mouth wide, it will displace the upper part of the jaw, gather the tongue against the bit, or place it over the bit, let it hang out on the side and use a number of smart tricks to escape from the effect of the bit and bending of the neck, and brace its body. The rider, easily deceived,

mistakes the "standing behind the bit" in the school for light touch. In the open he begins to realise that the horse is not bent, and has deceived him by creeping behind the bit. It is difficult to break such bad habits. The nose band prevents them. Some riders have such a hard hand and faulty application of the thigh, that horses will nevertheless acquire these bad habits. A light hand, in combination with the nose strap, prevents them.

H. The nose band no longer forms part of the regulation field equipment.

S. Unfortunately not. If a horse is perfectly broken, *i.e.*, supple and obedient, it may confidently be ridden without nose strap for an ordinary ride, hunting, etc. In the service it is an evil. This is proven by the extraordinary increase of horses who stick out the tongue. Fifteen years ago they were infrequent, now they are numerous. For this reason I regret that it has been discarded, and hope it will again be adopted.

H. You were quite right in discussing the handling of the reins before the bending, as from faulty management of the reins and incorrect application of auxiliary reins a faulty bending must result. Permit me, therefore, to revert to the question how you begin the side bending lessons.

S. The sideward bending of the horse is begun by every rider, by most of them without knowing it, with that turning in which the hind hand steps in the trail of the fore hand. It is that turning (passing of a corner) in which the application of the inner leg and letting go of the hind hand is no longer used to teach obedience to thigh, but in which the hind hand is checked by the outer leg. Fewer riders know how in such passing of a corner a horse must bend as on a large circle, and what demands are made on the horse by beginning too early with the passing of corners.

H. Then you give the first bending lesson on the circle in the school?

S. The large circle in the school is too small for the beginning. Begin on a large open space, with half and quarter circles of greater diameter; but, mind you, not before the horse obeys thigh and rein on a straight course at a medium gait, makes but one trail, and can increase or decrease the gait according to the rider's will.

H. That would be about the time when riding in squads on the square with distances may be begun.

S. About, yes; but not before the horse can bend without pain on a circle so small as the large circle of half the school. In the square the riding should at first be so regulated that along the short side a half circle is described instead of passing two corners. Under no circumstances should riding on the square with distances be begun too early or continued too long. Individual riding always remains the chief consideration. It follows from what I have stated, that not all horses should be brought into the square at the same time for riding with distances, but one after the other when sufficiently progressed. Riding with distances is of great



value. It is, as previously stated, the test whether the rider has worked forward or backward. For the service it is a matter of necessity to equalise the pace; otherwise closed evolutions would be impracticable. When horses once go a medium pace, and can increase or decrease the gait, observance of distances no longer entails danger to the gait as at the beginning, when the horse must be allowed to go its natural gait.

H. I told you before that Langenn enjoined us not to regulate the distance by increasing or decreasing the gait, but invariably by rounding off the corners or following them more closely. Increase and decrease of gait he demanded, according to the horse's progress, at every stage of training, until it could be done at every step, and perfect obedience to thigh and rein obtained. For regulating distances, however, he prohibited any change of gait, driving forward, or holding back.

S. He is right as to detail. On the whole, however, all riders must pass over the same distance in the same time, and thus a uniform medium gait is obtained, such as prescribed in the regulations.

H. Further bending is obtained by riding closely into the corners.

S. Yes, but very gradually, and at first with a considerable rounding off. Then you may advance to the circle and bend the neck in motion.

H. Not at a halt?

S. In the beginning I prefer the bending while in motion, because in bending the horse at a walk, it is apt to get behind the bit. I begin with a lively medium trot. When it is once certain that the horse will not creep behind the bit, you may bend its neck at a walk, and finally at a halt.

H. I have heard some riders say that they began with bending the fore hand; others, that they began with the hind hand. I never could understand that.

S. Nor can it be understood, for the former is injurious; the latter, impossible.

H. But you stated the last time, that in beginning the turnings, the hind hand may be allowed to fall away. In doing this, in the circle and change, the fore hand is bent alone without the hind hand.

S. You forget that it was during the preparatory stage only, in order to impart to the horse a lesson, to teach it the rider's language, to render it obedient to the thigh. If, after the hind hand has been brought under, and bending of neck and haunch in the vertical plane has been attained, sideward bending is begun for purposes of training, a gross error is committed in bending the fore hand without the hind hand. Bending of the fore hand without the hind hand is impossible, since we ride with thighs and reins. Whoever says that he bends the hind hand first has recognised the disadvantages of the bending of the fore hand alone, begins as recommended by me by bringing under the hind hand, and believes he is bending the latter only. Without knowing he is bending the fore hand at the same time, if he has a good, steady hand. The horse is a very singular being, upon which any kind of action produces effects. You cannot act upon any part without affecting other parts at the same time.

Hence it should be endeavoured to act correctly upon all parts of the horse's body at the same time.

H. You would seem to be decidedly opposed to bending the horse led by hand.

S. Bending by hand must be used cautiously and discreetly. The horse is apt to be brought behind the bit, as in Baucher's works all the horses are drawn with the bend in the region of the third vertebra. To make himself intelligible to, and familiar with the horse, a good rider may risk the bending by hand; not too much, however, or too long, nor so that the hind hand escapes the effect of the bridle.

H. Do you accomplish the further bending by means of the circle?

S. The circle of six paces diameter is about the sharpest bending that a horse may be subjected to, for we ride even the riding paces with the bend of the body given by the circle (a sharper following of the corners in itself is a sharper bend, but only a quarter of a circle). A good circle is the touchstone of complete training. Generally the circles are begun too early; more particularly circles with distances and command should not be ridden until the horses are thoroughly worked through.

H. I have known many riders who were decidedly opposed to any circle work, and were of the opinion that the only result was that the horses got lame.

S. That is bound to be the case when it is overdone, and likewise if any bending is overdone. Most riders fail to consider what pain the poor animal is suffering in its muscles from the unwonted bending, and how necessary it is to allow the horse frequently, very frequently, to stretch itself. How our own muscles ache when kept for some time in an uncomfortable position! How do we stretch ourselves? And to the horse we are unwilling to concede this, and lay to ill nature and unwillingness when it does what it is prompted to do by severe pain. No wonder if it does become unwilling. Hence quite short lessons; frequent opportunity for the horse to stretch itself; frequent change by bending to the other side, and, to prevent the hind hand from remaining behind, frequent change to the medium trot with which any exercise should wind up, the object of which is bending. Frequently we see such an exercise continued too long; for instance, an instructor will sometimes keep a squad on the circle on the same hand for a quarter of an hour. Nothing could be more injurious to the character and nature of the horse than the senseless riding of exercises for their own sake. With every lesson the rider should have an object in view, and when he has attained it in some slight measure, reward the horse by leaving it untortured, and practising something else. A lesson by itself without object is senseless and harmful.

H. We frequently find even good horsemen too deeply enlisted in circle work for bending the horse on one hand.

S. When they do so, because they continue the exercise too long on one side, they show that they do not understand their business and are not good horsemen. It happens, however, that an otherwise good man becomes angry, practically when he begins to feel tired. Well, an angry man hardly ever does anything wise.

H. My oft-mentioned instructor had a good remedy for the quick anger of riders. He always carried a knife in his pocket, and whenever a rider became very angry with his horse, he would offer him the knife to kill the horse on the spot; he said that would be better than to torment it that way. This offer invariably had a calming effect.

S. I cannot refrain from inviting your attention to an error committed by most riders in bending, and revert again to the seat. They allow their seat to be deranged by the work of the hands. They then sit the horse obliquely and thus give with their weight and thigh unintentional, and therefore faulty aids. In doing so the inner hand passes over the horse's back to the outer side, while the outer hand passes to the inner side. The crossing of the hands confuses the horse, and should not be tolerated. Yet you can see that frequently.

H. It would perhaps be well to endeavour to progress before winter sets in sufficiently far in the training of the remount to allow of riding on the square with distances.

S. Why? Errors of precipitation are always committed when a certain term is set for certain progress.

H. When the wintry season prevents work in the open because the riding places are frozen over hard, and the school is at the disposal of the remounts for three-quarters of an hour or an hour each day, all remounts must be brought to the school together.

S. Most of them will be sufficiently advanced. If, however, one or the other is not, it should preferably be worked by itself.

H. But the school is occupied all day.

S. It will not be occupied all day, if the old horses are so ridden and treated as I want them to be. The school is there chiefly for the sake of the remounts and recruits. They have preference. Everything else comes after them. Any kind of school work is fruitful of result only if the horse is ridden by itself without regard to distances and commands. This alone should show you why the old schools were built so small. They were built with regard for individual horses. The instructor should dismount the squad, and let it rest or move about in the school, and should take the riders one by one, of whom perhaps two or three at the most work by themselves at the same time, but without reference to each other. In the beginning the whole squad, observing distances, should ride medium gaits only, and practise increasing and decreasing the same, not, however, without considerably rounding off the corners.

H. Would you not put the whole squad on the circle, increase and decrease the circle, and bend in the medium trot?

S. Not until individual work has shown that the horse has made sufficient progress. Individual riding must remain the main reliance. In this manner an overworking of the young animals by training is avoided; the riding instructions mean to prevent overwork by prescribing a maximum of one hour use of the school, for if you prescribe much individual riding, a part is resting, and each horse is subjected to training and fatigue during one-half only of the prescribed time; during the other half it is resting.

H. Would you let young remounts gallop in the school?

S. Why not? if they are sufficiently advanced, it does them no harm. The duration of the gallop should, however, be shorter than in the open, because in the small school the turnings come oftener than in the large riding place, and fatigue the horses. At any rate, it should not be considered a crime on the part of the horse when it falls into a gallop of its own accord, nor should it be held back, but it should, as I have explained for the natural gallop, be driven with the thighs, to prevent the hind hand from remaining behind.

H. What is the next bending lesson you would take up after enlarging and diminishing the circle and bending on the circle?

S. It is the riding of the medium gaits in the second position. Few riders are aware how strongly the horse must bend to go in the second position. They should be compelled once to walk even five minutes with their faces turned as far to the right as the horse must turn its face, so that the rider may see the nose and eye, and they would soon feel pain in their muscles. The position toward the same side should therefore not be continued too long, as all exercises should be continued but for a short time in the beginning. It is important to use at first lively medium gaits only. It is in these alone that the hind hand (and more particularly the inner hind foot) is so much brought under, that it begins to carry the fore hand, while in a shuffling, sleepy gait the hind hand remains behind.

H. A very effective lesson is the riding in counter-position, especially on the circle.

S. A very effective lesson indeed, which is to be recommended. But because it is so effective it should be used with discretion, for its effect on the horse is in proportion. I recommend, therefore, to make in the beginning but few successive steps in that position, and to pass not more than one corner, strongly rounded off, in the counter position, if you wish to avoid injury to the horse's hind legs. This lesson is the principal means by which trainers working for the horse traders quickly reduce horses to some kind of obedience, in order that they may be sold at an early date, not caring, of course, what becomes of the horse afterward, a method of training called "The Jew's spit." Yet this lesson is not to be rejected with horses which, while in the proper position, show inclination to give way with the croup to the outer side and to refuse the hind hand.

H. Closely connected with the second position is the "breaking off." Langenn never liked the term, and called it instead, "giving way with the hand."

S. The term, it is true, is not well chosen, because it is apt to make one believe that the application of force is implied. This exercise should likewise not be overdone. The rider should give as soon as the horse gives, and use his thighs so that the horse may not creep behind the bit. It should therefore be begun while in motion at a medium trot, nor should it be omitted in the gallop as soon as a medium gallop is admissible, and it is only subsequently that this lesson should be taken in hand at a walk. Nor

should it be done at a halt before the horse is well up to and confidently champs the bit, the hind hand well under. Like bending, the "breaking off" dismounted by hand, should be done with great caution.

H. What has struck me most regarding the division into training periods contained in the riding instructions, is, that they require that the young remounts be practised in the side paces as early as March and April.

S. It is stated on page 44, that during the first year the precision required in the second year is not to be demanded at first in any of the lessons. That does not mean that they may be ridden awkwardly, in impure gaits, the hind hand falling away instead of being brought under, but that in the lessons on the double trail, the two hoof tracks must not be farther apart than in the finished side pace.

H. Your demand coincides with the principles established by Langenn. He demanded that in the beginning the one-sixteenth "shoulder in" should be ridden.

S. In nothing is there greater error committed than in the lessons on the double trail. They are practised for their own sake, to show them off at the inspection, not as a gymnastic exercise, as a means to an end. When the end has been attained, the means is no longer needed. Hence lessons on the double trail should never be "inspected," least of all in squads with distances. The efficiency of the horse trained as a military mount should be looked for as the result, and the means thereto should not be used for quadrille exhibitions.

H. I had a horse once that had never been put through the lessons on the double trail, and yet was perfectly active and fit for everything that could be demanded from a military mount. When old it went willingly under a young rider, even the paces on the double trail, which it had never been taught. I rode the horse more than seventeen years.

S. Not every horse needs the gaits on the double trail to become an efficient military mount. There are horses formed by nature so normally and presenting so little difficulty, that they do not need these exercises. They can do them more readily, and are therefore frequently used to show the art of riding in its highest perfection. There are other horses of such difficult build, that they can never be given lessons on the double trail without injury. In such cases it is better to omit these lessons altogether, than to ride them incorrectly. Frequently, almost invariably, these lessons are begun too early and the horse's gait is spoiled. Whenever you see remounts whose hind hand is not brought up, which pace at a walk, which, at the trot, do not step with the hind hoof as far as the imprints of the fore hoof, nine times out of ten they have been spoiled by premature lessons on the double trail, ridden faultily at that, in which the hind hand falls away instead of being brought under and carrying the fore hand.

H. It is better, of course, not to give any lessons on the double trail than to give faulty ones.

S. Worst of all it is with the "shoulder in." Horses may well be broken without this lesson. That was possible before the times of its

inventors, La Guérinières and the Duke of Newcastle. At the time, the invention was looked upon as the expression of the highest perfection in the high school, not as a means of instruction. These old masters of the art of riding would turn in their graves if they should see what is now perpetrated as the "shoulder in."

H. Yet it is prescribed in the riding instructions.

S. Whoever reads that part attentively feels what difficulties the author encountered to make himself even approximately understood. It is supplemented by an addendum explaining the many errors committed in the "shoulder in" and attributed to insufficient work and too high demands, *i.e.*, invariably to precipitation in training. It is therefore in the sense of the riding instructions not to demand too much, and to work the horses sufficiently in elementary exercises before passing to lessons on the double trail. They should be deferred until the horse is sufficiently prepared, and if it never reaches that stage, they had better be omitted altogether.

H. Could you make a horse active for campaign riding without these lessons?

S. Not only can I do so, but I am compelled to, since, as stated above, there are horses which can never go those paces without injury. The "shoulder in" can be dispensed with altogether. The other side paces might be replaced, in case of difficult conformation, using position and counter position with increased application of the outer thigh, by a gait resembling the one-sixteenth passage mentioned by you, and which causes the hind hand to be brought well under the load, which is the sole object of all these exercises. You find the same idea explained in detail in the excellent book of Plinzner.

H. Then you would prefer to do away with the "shoulder in"?

S. I should like to see it absolutely forbidden to teach these lessons to whole squads, and to have them ridden with distances, just as in the introduction of the riding instructions it is forbidden to teach the lessons intended for the third riding class to whole squads. On the other hand, the men of the preferred class, who have to do the breaking, should learn the lessons on the double trail one after the other, as their knowledge increases, provided they fulfil the preliminary requisites, *i.e.*, light hand, rider feeling, correct aids. We must insist that the non-execution of difficult lessons does no harm; that badly-ridden lessons are bound to do harm.

H. You spoke above of bending and "breaking off" in the medium trot. You certainly could not practise side paces in the medium trot.

S. Certainly not. A perfect side pace can only be ridden in the shortened trot with high action.

H. But according to your statements the shortened trot belongs to the high school.

S. Yes, when perfect; just like the shortened gallop and the side paces on the double trail, if they are to be ridden faultlessly.

H. Then you want the horses taught the shortened trot on a straight



course by continued work in increasing and decreasing the gait, before passing on to the side paces.

S. That would be irrational. We never complete one thing entirely before beginning the next. All kind of work with the object of bending the horse must progress simultaneously. The trot "with shortened gait" must be developed simultaneously with the side pace, very gradually, however, and never more rapidly than in proportion to the horse's capability and bodily development.

H. I think I understand you now. When the horse has learned how to go the medium trot with position, and has made some progress in "breaking off," and increasing and decreasing the gait, then you shorten the gait somewhat and give more position to the fore hand or to the hind hand, or to the hind hand with counter position, giving thus an idea of the side paces, and at the same time increasing and decreasing the shortened medium trot.

S. I ride the side pace on the single trail, so to speak—the one-sixteenth side pace, as Langenn calls it. As bending, capability and development of the horse progress, I take more position, so that finally the trail of the fore hand separates from that of the hind hand, and, hand in hand with this, I strive for increased shortening of the trot.

H. I believe there is danger of being deceived by the horse by a lazy, shuffling gait, which may be a short trot in which the horse fails to bring the hind hand under.

S. When the rider perceives that the hind hand is not brought under the body, he must conclude that he is shortening too much, is taking too much position, and should at once revert to regulating the gait, *i.e.*, driving forward with the thigh and taking less position, for he had passed to the more difficult lesson prematurely. It is the prerequisite for any trot that it be ridden actively, in order that the hind hand may gradually be placed under the body, as I told you before.

H. Then you would attain the perfect side pace, with the distance between the two trails as laid down in the instructions, at the same time with the perfect, shortened trot.

S. Yes, if both are attainable at all. If not, I content myself with that measure of side pace and shortening of the gait which the horse's conformation and development permit. For I make it a point, that a perfectly developed and regularly formed riding horse alone is capable of going a perfect side pace and trot with shortened gait.

H. Then you content yourself with a measure of side pace and shortening commensurate with the conformation and development of the horse.

S. Yes; and under certain circumstances, without any side pace, and with a mere riding with position, and increasing and decreasing of the medium trot. For there are horses which can never go side paces, and yet must and can be rendered active for use in the cavalry. This is expressly stated in the riding instructions. Now, just as there are horses unfit for side paces on account of their conformation, so there are horses

which can only go them to a limited extent, and with which the requirements of the instructions must be relaxed. It is preferable to ride little or no side pace rather than to demand one from a horse such as it is as yet incapable of going. I again remind you that a horse must be in possession of its full strength; if it is not it will be injured by the school trot with shortened gait, and by far the least number of our old remounts are strong enough for this purpose.

H. Then it is your opinion, that but few of our "old remounts" are capable of going the perfect regulation shortened trot and side pace.

S. If one of the sixty-five old remounts of a regiment is capable of doing it, it is an exception. Those whose conformation admits of it at all, have not their full strength until later.

H. Is it not, on the other hand, a doubtful measure to rest satisfied with a defective side pace as a means of instruction?

S. We must distinguish between a poorly ridden side pace and one not abreast of all the demands of the riding instructions. The latter may be ridden perfectly, but does not demand more from the horse than it can do. It will always be useful. It is only necessary that the shortened trot be ridden actively, that while in the position it is intended to give the horse, the gait be not shortened for the sake of position or side pace, but be increased and decreased for the purpose of bringing up the hind hand.

H. There are many men who refer to the side paces in general by saying that they let the horse "step over." But Bally says, that his father, the celebrated equerry, ever declared any crossing of the horse's legs a fault.

S. If the side paces are to be ridden strictly according to the rules of the high school, and with perfection, then the horse's legs must cross, must step over. But the stepping over is not the object; it is a test of the degree of training. The main thing is the stepping under of the hind legs, the bending of the hind hand. The difference between the partial lesson well ridden, and the whole lesson badly ridden, is this, that the former, whether you ride with second position or with "one-sixteenths pace," or with a trifle more distance between the two trails, has never any other purpose than the bringing under of the hind hand, the bending of the entire spinal column, the neck and the posture of the horse around the inner thigh. The latter rests content with a senseless, sideward staggering, in which the horse stiffens itself, does not become obedient, slips away its hind quarter and hurts itself with its hoofs. Any such side pace is wrong, whether due to the fact that the aids were faulty or that more was required of the horse than suitable to its degree of training or strength. Again I revert to my principal axiom: "*Rather no side pace at all, than one badly ridden.*"

H. But there certainly are some things which all campaign horses must learn, as closing up, dressing backward, turning on the hind hand, etc.

S. What I just said, had reference to the higher lessons, which are used in training as gymnastics, such as the passage, shoulder in, trot and gallop, with shortened gait. The movements mentioned by you, we have for their own sake, for we need them for the drill in ranks. Any horse fit for use must learn and know them. Dressing backwards, it is true, serves for purposes of gymnastics as well as training, and should be used very discreetly.

H. I would like best to ask you to detail to me the whole course of remount training on the lines of the riding instructions.

S. What for? I could only say "Yes and Amen" to everything in these instructions, and perhaps point out that it is necessary to comprehend their meaning to adapt oneself to every individual horse, and to advance in conformity with its capability and bodily development, and eschew adhering to the letter and stencil-plate drill. One point I will mention specially, leaving out of consideration the exercises which, the horse once thoroughly worked over, are necessary for cavalry, as for instance the use of arms, riding in the terrain, taking of obstacles, swimming, etc.; the essence of the whole riding course is the endeavour to produce a correct regulation long gallop, and the development of full speed.

H. Rosenberg, in his "Chance Ideas," rejects full speed in the charge altogether.

S. You shall see in a moment how little Rosenberg's and my ideas differ. When the horse is firm in the medium gallop, is up to the bit, and can increase and decrease the medium gallop according to the rider's will, the long gallop of 500 paces per minute should be diligently practised, so that the horses can keep it up for some time, and feel at home in it, without losing their wind.

H. Not, I suppose, while confined to the covered school?

S. Certainly not. The many corners would make many horses lame. It is to be practised on extensive riding grounds with rounded off turns; individually at first, then two, three, four abreast, with intervals; also with distances to break any tendency to flurry, and, if they be well in hand, to instil a uniform drill pace. It should ever be kept in mind that more ground must be gained in the gallop than in the trot; for if the trot is sufficient, it is unnecessary to gallop. Whoever, at a gallop, does not experience a sense of safety and delight on his horse's back, needs force to retain his seat and control of the horse, will never experience success and delight in riding, and had better give up the idea of preparing a horse for the military service. It is only in the long gallop, with light touch of rein, that the attentive rider becomes aware of the influence of the seat upon the horse, its endurance, speed, confidence and ease. In the charge, in the shock, at full speed, the tactical action of cavalry culminates. Full speed must therefore be developed with much care and industry. The more practice man and horse can get in it, the more you can count on a well closed charge against the enemy. The closed attack is difficult to ride, especially outside of the smooth, level drill ground, and only possible when every rider has control of his horse. However much horses like to gallop,

they do not like it in closed ranks, because of the absence of freedom of motion. It is only the power conferred on the rider by the training that prevails on the horse. Full speed develops itself from the gallop. Whoever knows how to gallop, how to increase and diminish the gallop, can also ride full speed; whoever does not know how to gallop, whoever, as stated, is not a thoroughly instructed horseman, cannot ride full speed; for he cannot control his horse in the charge. Yet full speed frequently receives in the squadron the same stepmotherly treatment as the long gallop. The reason is, that neither horse nor rider are sufficiently trained for it, the former as regards independent seat, the latter because accustomed to the long pace. Neither will, therefore, have confidence in his own power. In the excitement over the unusual, the horses hurry, the cramped seat impedes the forward movement; some horses run away, others creep behind the bit and refuse to travel. On the other hand, horses that have been made obedient, can go full speed.

H. In hearing you, one might believe himself to be listening to the doctrines of the steeplechaser.

S. Both kinds of riding, it is true, culminate in the long gallop and full speed. In the chase, the latter is the "finish"; with the soldier, it is the shock. The great difference is this, that the steeplechaser leaves entire freedom to his horse's hind quarter, while holding neck and head low, guides it with both hands and good touch, careful to so select his way that the gallop step is not interfered with. When it comes to the finish, everything depends on getting the horse to develop its fullest speed. Whether, when and how the horse is to be checked after passing the finish post, is a matter of indifference. The military mount is to be guided by one hand, and should be capable, at any moment, of being turned short or checked with hind legs well under. It must, besides, be accustomed to carry itself, to look out for itself under a light rein; in the dense column, in line, in dust and smoke, it cannot select its way, nor can the rider select its way for it; in the evolutions, the latter's attention is too much engaged with other things; the horse must therefore be accustomed to jump suddenly high and wide without onset, and yet retain its balance. Last, but not least, in the charge the speed must be regulated by that of the slower horses, if the charge is to be as closed as required by regulations. The long gallop and full speed must therefore, in military riding, be ridden with more reservation. I believe I explained that to you once before.

H. Don't you think that this reserved full speed is the one demanded by Rosenberg who rejects full speed and demands the hunting gallop for the charge?

S. I cannot dispense entirely with the full speed, the shock in the charge, if for no other reason than that of the moral effect on both sides. I remind you of Zorndorf. In the charge against infantry and artillery, full speed is not absolutely necessary; it is against cavalry. I prefer to keep up the trot long, gallop for but a short distance, if possible, to get well under way, and command "Charge!" just before the collision.

If you simply increase the long gallop, you produce laxity, which leads to the breaking of the front, and in the most favourable case, to a doubtful hand-to-hand fight, which costs lives unnecessarily. I agree with Rosenberg in so far as he rejects the short, jerky full speed, as it was formerly ridden and exhibited. But the full speed which we need for the shock, for breaking the opposing front, we cannot do without, and he wants it too. He simply calls the child by another name, and calls it full gallop. The reason why we see outside of the drill ground so many charges which are not closed, is that in the individual training of man and horse the ultimate object, warlike efficiency, the long gallop and full speed, were not kept in view.

H. I judge from all this that you are strongly opposed to the short gallop.

S. On the contrary. The short gallop, *i.e.*, the gallop with shortened gait, is a good means of instruction to make the horse supple and flexible. It is a school pace like the shortened trot and all lessons on the double trail. These lessons should therefore be taken in hand only with horses of full strength and obedience. It should be ridden with much bending of the haunch and little ground should be gained; the more the hind hand squats and the higher the fore hand gallops, the better. For campaign riding it is absolutely useless. If nothing were known of Prince Frederick Charles than that he prohibited the parade march in the shortened gallop, I should judge from that fact alone that he grasped the true cavalry spirit. As means to an end, however, the short school gallop is very good. It should therefore be taught by the best riders only, and practised by them in individual riding. It should not be required by squads and by command, for even among the best riders of a squadron there are some who, led astray by their care for observing distance, resort to force or fail to notice when the horse gets behind the bit. It is difficult to ride it well and beneficially. Faultily ridden, it is harmful as any faulty lesson; hence it had better be omitted altogether. The gallop with shortened gait is not to be mistaken for the shortening of the gait at the medium gallop. Any rider of the squadron ought to be able to do that.

H. But you would require of the officers the gallop with shortened gait?

S. I fail to see why all the officers should not learn the entire high school for their own enjoyment, and I should be delighted if they all could. The same way I extend my patronage and feel gratified whenever they take part in races, especially in the hunting field. When they are able to do these things perfectly, they will perceive in what these branches of the art of riding differ from campaign riding, and how and in what particular the three branches must be kept separate.

H. It is getting late, and I have already plied you too much with questions. Permit me just one more. How many riders in a squadron do you mean to use for horse breaking?

S. Not a single man more than those in possession of the necessary qualification, as I stated before.

H. The four-year volunteers ought to present a good contingent because they enter the cavalry from love to the horse, and in many cases have learned riding before entering the service.

S. Their number varies a good deal in the different regiments, and averages annually about fifty, or ten per squadron, in some regiments only seventeen, or three or four per squadron. It ought to be gratifying to find one-half of them suited to the training of remounts.

H. That would make from one to three per year, that is, if they are available for remount riding in their second year of service, from three to nine altogether. How many non-commissioned officers do you think possess the necessary qualification?

S. One half of them at the most; that is, seven.

H. The squadron will then, according as it has more or fewer four-year volunteers, have to train fewer or more general recruits, i.e., from twenty-five to thirty-three. How many, from your experience, do you think will be sufficiently skilled for use as trainers during their second and third year of service?

S. Barely the fourth part of them.

H. Both contingents, then, would give the squadron from twelve to sixteen. With a large number of four-year volunteers this would give a total of thirty-four. Taking into consideration detached service, promotion of four-year volunteers to non-commissioned officers, sickness, or other losses, the squadron might soon be able to furnish a rider for each remount of the two contingents of thirteen horses, not to mention the horses that need re-breaking.

S. These figures do not shake my principles. It is absolutely necessary that the horses of the youngest remount class be trained by suitable riders only. If I had but three or four such riders in the squadron, I would rather let them ride three or four horses each daily, than put unsuitable riders on the young animals. The riding in the squadron will then show early progress, and in this manner in itself increase the necessary number of suitable riders. There is even some advantage in having the trainers ride more than one horse daily. For riding, riding, and again and again riding, is what produces good riders.

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## TWELFTH CONVERSATION. (APRIL 4TH, 1886.)

### OF THE TRAINING OF THE RECRUITS.

H. After what you have told me of your principles of remount training, I can well imagine how you want the training of recruits handled. I think it is your wish to have every recruit make a certain progress in riding before you combine them in squads.

S. If that were possible I should consider it the best way. For the riding instructors, even troop commanders themselves, sin much by slighting the fundamental principles of riding, particularly the acquirement



of a good seat during the period of recruit training, and by not making the young riders firm in the seat from the beginning. The rider with a loose seat seeks support in the bridles during rapid motion and thus injures the horse's mouth. He not only fails to retain control of his horse, but diminishes the amount of food taken by it, since with the pain in its mouth, it cannot chew hard fodder. You may observe that during the manoeuvres.

H. In war when horses cannot be spared, it must end in their death.

S. Then so or so many sabres are absent from before the enemy. Frederick the Great said: "*Soignez les détails, ils sont le premier pas qui mène à la victoire.*"

H. The truth of these words of the king was no doubt confirmed by his experience in the Seven Years' War. His cavalry, unsurpassed to this day, and trained in detail by peace exercises, performed magnificent deeds in the first campaign. These deeds diminished, however, in number as the war continued, though the tried leaders remained. The reason was that men and horses, so thoroughly trained in detail, perished.

S. And the war left no time for similar detailed training of the recruits. One of the king's first cares after the termination of the war was to resume the training of the cavalry in detail. He gave inspectors to the cavalry and said: "*J'ai introduit des inspecteurs dans la cavalerie pour égaliser les régiments, pour voir les troupes plus souvent et tenir la main à l'exécution de mes ordres. Il est vrai qu'il y a de bons généraux et de bons chefs de régiments, mais il n'est pas plus facile de choisir 4 inspecteurs rigides que tant de chefs qui, pouvant avoir d'ailleurs de la valeur et de bonnes qualités, n'ont pas celle de maintenir l'ordre.*"

You see the great king sought a guarantee for the success of the cavalry not only in good leading in battle, but also in detailed instruction.

H. If I understand you right, you would like to see Edelsheim's method of beginning the recruit training, introduced in our service, each recruit being separately taken on the longe and confirmed in his seat at all gaits with hands crossed behind the back, before putting a rein in his hand.

S. It would certainly be the best way, if, as I said once before, we had enough instructors and, more particularly, men who knew how to handle longe and whip.

H. We have to train each year twenty-eight to thirty-four recruits per squadron, if you will permit me to base my calculation on the figures we agreed on the last time, namely, three four-year volunteers and twenty-five three-year men, or one four-year volunteer and thirty-three three-year men.

S. Allow in addition one one-year volunteer, also some loss from the number of privates through promotion of four-year volunteers to non-commissioned officers, through disability, etc. This loss must be made

good by additional recruits to keep up the full complement. The squadron thus may easily have thirty-six or forty recruits.

H. To take five recruits daily in riding, one after the other, is about as much as one instructor can do.

S. Let him take nine men, three squads of three men each, who alternate on the horse during the same hour; at the beginning of the recruit training the instructor would thus give instruction during three or four hours per day, which is entirely practicable. We used to need four or five recruit instructors. Suppose we had them in the squadron, each instructor would still need two assistants for longe and whip, and each squadron would need eight or ten men who understand riding; that number cannot be spared every day for three or four hours because the breaking of remounts and training of the squadron has to go on at the same time.

H. Edelsheim, I understand, has three recruits instructed at the same time. One rides, the other two handle longe and whip under the instructor's orders.

S. The only weak point in the system of instruction is that such expedients have to be resorted to. Longe and whip are difficult to manage properly; such men only as understand riding can do it. In the hands of recruits they may do much evil to man and horse.

H. How would you go to work to impart to the recruit a correct seat and to confirm it, before entrusting him with the reins?

S. In view of the large number of recruits which join the squadron at the same time, we are unable to make the rate of progress of the training dependent upon the capacity of the individual as we do with remounts, all the less as the recruits must all, by the spring, be "prepared" to such an extent that they may be placed in ranks as combatants.

Here we are bound as to time. Nothing remains therefore but to carry on the instruction in riding at the beginning *en bloc*. Attention should at this time chiefly be paid to the seat.

H. The riding instructions contain detailed regulations on pages 34 to 37 how to do it.

S. These excellent instructions are, in most cases, not properly observed. It is expressly stated, that at first attention should be given to the seat alone, that distances need not be observed, that horses will, from habit, go one behind the other and need not be led. I ask you, in how many squadrons is this strictly observed? Is everywhere as much stress laid on mounted gymnastics as required by the instructions? Are these gymnastics used everywhere to confirm the seat at the halt, walk and trot, before the management of the reins is taught?

H. There is altogether too little attention paid to gymnastics in the cavalry. Even dismounted they are, in most cases, taught merely because they are prescribed and not as a means of training in order to give the recruit control over his limbs and impart to him a decent military step.

S. Mounted they are of equal value for the correct, firm seat, and afterward for the use of thigh and rein without affecting the seat.

The time thus exclusively devoted to the exercises on pages 34 to 37 of the riding instructions is, as a rule, shortened too much. You may observe that the recruits are mostly, if not on the first day, then during the first few days, instructed in the management of the reins, observing distance, or even in volts, when they are as yet wholly incapable of doing any of these things.

H. How would you like to have the recruits, as yet uninstructed in guiding, do the gymnastics mounted at a trot?

S. I put an old rider in the lead, let the recruits troll along behind in the moderate gait and manner prescribed on page 34, the reins knotted together, allow an occasional hold on the mane as against falling off, and make it short. I tell you it goes, and it goes very soon too.

H. The recruits should then ride the oldest horses which obey every command by themselves.

S. That would not be the most correct principle. The recruits must have the best horses in the squadron. Under "best horses" I understand a combination of lively gait and perfect and confirmed training. In this particular, many squadrons make mistakes. You may find that the twelve best trained horses under the best riders of the preceding recruit contingent are combined into a kind of model class in school riding, for the sole purpose of being able to exhibit with one squad neat little tricks at the final inspection in the spring. For warlike efficiency of the whole squadron it is of no value whatsoever. It simply deprives the recruits of the use of the twelve best horses during their first training. Just as the best riders must be put on the youngest remounts in order that the first beginning of the training of the horse may lay a correct foundation, so the recruits should be put on the best horses. I repeat: "As the rider trains the horse, so the horse will train the rider." On the old, stiff "crock" the beginner cannot experience the correct rider feeling.

Though naturally gifted for riding, he will get a wrong conception of the correct rider feeling if mounted on a stiff and torpid horse, and the gift is killed in the germ.

The proper selection of a mount for the recruit is of the most potent influence on the entire training of the squadron, and especially on the smartness of the young rider.

H. Do you not fear that these lively horses with fresh gaits will soon recognise the incipient horsemen from their deficiencies, become frisky, throw the riders and make them diffident—a thing against which the riding instructions caution so carefully?

S. I mean to give to the recruits horses with lively gaits, not frisky and ill-behaved horses. It may be that the animals notice during the first few days how little control the riders have over them. There is nothing to prevent the troop commander from having such horses exercised by an old soldier for half-an-hour preceding the riding lesson.

Badly broken horses should not be given to the recruits. If they are hard-mouthed and go on the fore hand as we frequently see, it renders the training of the young men uncommonly difficult, more particularly

so because the hard mouth causes the reins to be held tight and the young rider is misled from the beginning to hold on by the reins. On such animals he cannot learn how to let himself go, on the contrary, he will stiffen himself and use force with the reins, which is one of the greatest faults in riding.

The correct seat is the first consideration, it is the touchstone of all riding.

H. The first part of the riding instructions says the same thing, in fact begins with it.

S. Certainly! Yet its observance is not sufficiently general. A most excellent treatise on riding in the artillery, by Hube, has recently appeared. ("The uniform training of Field Artillery in riding and driving." Berlin, 1885. Voss.) The author very correctly states, that a correct seat is the first requirement.

H. He points out that in all lessons the instruction begins with a description of the aids by rein followed by those by thigh, and that that fact misleads most riding instructors in considering the aids by rein as the first requisite. If the pupil is constantly talked to about reins in the first place, he will use them chiefly and fret the horse.

S. That is because most riding instructors rattle off their instructions during the lesson without thinking, stick to the letter instead of grasping the meaning. The riding instructions describe all the aids, but do not give the order in which they should be taught.

H. Where the riding instructions speak of the order, they invariably begin with the seat. Thus in the section on the first riding of the recruit.

S. That section, as I have stated before, is rarely accorded the requisite attention. The seat is the first requisite. Riding means mastering the horse on which you sit. Whoever wishes to play the master, should not be insecure in his own position. For this reason a correct seat should be imparted to the rider before he is taught anything else. When the rider once sits firmly in the saddle, when he feels at home on horseback, it will not be difficult for him to carry out everything else that is to be imparted to him by subsequent instruction. Without confirmed and steady seat a calm and intelligent handling of the reins, intelligible to the horse, is as inconceivable as is the control of the horse later on at drill or the efficient use of arms. Nor can a rider who did not acquire a correct seat as a recruit ever break horses properly, since a proper action of the rider upon the horse, a mutual understanding, is out of the question.

H. That is perfectly plain. If the rider slides about on horseback and, in order to keep his seat, gives the animal every few moments an unintentional chuck in the mouth with the one or the other rein, the poor beast cannot know which of the aids by rein are meant as such and which are not.

S. Very true! The greatest mistake one can make is to condone the soldier if he seeks for support to his seat in the reins. A frequent, one of the most frequent errors, is to give to the recruits the stirrup too soon

and before they have acquired the firmness of seat, security, and balance necessary to enable them to move hands, arms and lower legs for the purpose of giving aids according to their own will, and never involuntarily for the purpose of keeping their seat.

The recruit should not be given the stirrups until he has widened sufficiently in the fork and learned to turn the thigh which is in most cases too round for riding, in the hip joint, that it may lie as flat as possible against the horse.

Here also, there is, as a rule, no distinction made between individuals, and all recruits receive the stirrup on the same day. That is irrational. For it is plain that not all recruits can have the same conformation, and that some require more time to acquire the seat than others.

Faults of seat which creep in at the beginning and become confirmed, are very difficult to eradicate. If the recruit does not become sufficiently widened in the fork, he cannot encompass the horse properly and will never learn how to let himself go; for he cannot sit securely without "hanging on," unless he encompasses the horse, must therefore squeeze with upper and lower leg and seek for support in the reins.

The steadiness, the repose of seat, rests on encircling the horse with the leg, and if the rider will let himself go, the horse will. If the rider stiffen himself, the horse will too.

H. If the recruit is not sufficiently widened in the fork, the bones of his seat will not be placed in the middle, he will thrust them out backward. The support of the upper body in vertical position on the three points, the fork and the two bones of the seat, is rendered illusory, and a free, disengaged seat impossible. For this reason the riding instructions enjoin that care be taken in the beginning that the rider spread his legs as far as possible in the fork and let them hang naturally. It is also recommended that at a halt he place his hands on the withers, spread the legs at the hip joint, push his seat forward and then sit down.

S. This elementary procedure is hardly in any squadron sufficiently practised, for as previously stated, without sufficient width in the fork and gripping rendered possible thereby, the man is compelled to hang on, to stiffen himself in order to retain his position. He will then try to accomplish by squeezing what ought to be accomplished by the balance, as it is called. He seeks to gain by sheer force what ought to be merely the result of the seat.

If he is given the stirrups before he has eradicated this fault, into which every rider is misled by fear of falling, he will ever thereafter thrust himself out behind, and stiffen the legs forward, more particularly in rapid paces, and seek more and more for support in the reins; he is systematically made to hang on by the reins.

H. In that case he is sure to constantly fret the horse by false aids of rein when no aids are called for at all, and make the best horse refractory.

S. I recently saw an instance of that as drastic as it was comical: A regimental commander had the recruits to ride before him and one of

them was to jump a ditch. He sat poorly, fretted the horse with the reins so that it naturally refused the ditch. The regimental commander commanded: "Halt"—"Reins—Loose!" "Thighs close!" This done, he thundered: "Forward!" and at once, without reins, the horse with its rider flew over the ditch willingly enough.

H. You can see many such pictures of recruits uneasily sticking at an obstacle and vainly jerking the reins.

S. The reason is that this habit, when once confirmed, can hardly ever be eradicated. Such a recruit will never in all his life become an efficient rider. For horse breaking he is still more unfit.

He not only jeopardises his usefulness as a cavalry soldier, but impairs the efficiency and durability of the horse. Care should therefore be taken from the beginning that the recruits do not fall into this bad habit. Strict supervision to prevent undue haste in the beginning of the instruction alone will do it.

The recruit must ride without reins or with very loose reins until his seat is so confirmed that he can ride all gaits without feeling any inclination or necessity to hang on by the reins. He must sit entirely independent from the reins.

H. Does it not require too much time to get the recruit on so far?

S. Not if the approved means recommended in the riding instructions is applied. It consists in mounted gymnastics. They impart to the recruit address, confidence, self-reliance, and resolution on horseback.

He must become so disengaged in his seat that in moving the arms, for instance, both or either of them, in bending the body toward the ground or in any direction, in turning the rump, etc., the legs be left wholly unaffected and continue to hold the horse gently encircled. The same is true of the hand in which the reins are. It must remain steady and unmoved, however forcibly the other arm may be used.

The necessity for any mounted man of being able to go through these exercises, should be explained to the recruit at the very beginning and repeated until he has acquired this dexterity.

H. Unless the short period allotted for training make instruction in the handling of the reins necessary ere this, the recruits will at once be able to handle them without altering the seat and thus giving unintentional and therefore wrong aids.

S. Earlier than this the management of the reins should never be taught. The advantage of this dexterity, of command over the limbs for the use of arms, and for correct action upon the horse on the part of the rider, is self-evident.

Whoever strains his body on horseback, stiffens himself constantly, will never come up to the requirements, will never be a good rider or nimble on horseback. Whoever stiffens himself has no horseman's feeling, and makes the horses hard-mouthed and numb. But anyone who has not from the very beginning been made wide in the fork, who has not been placed deep in the saddle, will and must stiffen himself the moment he rides faster than a walk, as I just proved. The more rapid the motion



the gait of the horse, the greater is the effect of the seat, of the more or less steady sitting down, of the quitting of the original position, of the stiffening, etc., on the horse's position.

It has often been incomprehensible to me why so many riders, who in the rapid gaits brace their legs forward in the stirrups and, drawing in their body, thrust their seat out behind and hang on to the reins hard and fast, do not become aware of their own accord, that it is their own fault, the fault of their seat, when their horses at the long trot or long gallop pull like mad, become unmanageable and finally run away. For I should think it to be plain that, when the rider during the rapid gait changes his position and suddenly braces himself, it must produce some effect on the horse. The more rapid the gait, the more violent the motion, the more should the rider sit steady and immovable. That holds good for any method of riding.

When fretted by the rider in the gallop, the jockey's horse loses its stride, the soldier's horse its position.

When in rapid gaits the rider suddenly takes the jockey's seat, he should not be surprised if the horse loses its natural position and seeks for firm support in the reins. Many riders are surprised at this and in vain seek a remedy in sharper biting or auxiliary reins, when a steady, reposeful seat would do it.

H. No animal in all creation has to stand such ill treatment as the horse.

S. And simply because the rider is not firm in the saddle. As long as he is not firm in the saddle, at home on the horse, does not feel secure on the horse, he cannot be considered fit for war, nor can demands be made on him which have for their object some correct action upon the horse on the part of the rider.

Practice will make his seat firm, provided he has, in the first place, been put in the saddle correctly. Therefore—I repeat it and cannot repeat it too often—nothing new should be taken in hand until the recruit has a correct, light, and encompassing seat and has become firm in the saddle.

H. It would seem to me as though of the time allotted to the training of the recruits not enough could be spared for this purpose, for how many things must the man not learn during this period of less than six months!

S. The time must be spared. The recruit once firm in the saddle with a correct seat, everything else he has to learn will be child's play in comparison. I would not give up one second of the time required for it.

H. But you have just stated yourself, that the recruit training is regulated by certain limits of time, more so than remount breaking.

S. In the main, yes. But no limit of time should be set to instruction in the fundamental elements of the seat.

In most cases too little time is devoted to the first riding combined with gymnastics, that is, the preparatory exercises mentioned on pages 34 to 37 of the riding instructions, and for which it is expressly laid down

that the recruit shall not begin to ride in the prescribed position and form until he has mastered them. If all due patience be exercised and nothing new taken in hand, until a good result has been obtained, the time so spent is quickly made up by the rapid progress of the recruits.

Again I point out that each individuality must be treated separately. This rule is constantly violated, for most squadrons give saddle and stirrup to all recruits on the same day, although it is expressly stated in the riding instructions that the matter should be regulated according to every man's individuality. The instructions say: "After the recruit (not recruits) has acquired an unconstrained, secure seat by means of the foregoing exercises, he must learn, etc. . . ."

H. It requires much patience; not every instructor has it.

S. Any instructor who is to impart dexterity of body and nimbleness, must have patience. If he have not that patience, he is not fit to be an instructor. Patience is required in remount training, patience in the training of recruits.

H. I have found that many riders contract the habit of stiffening themselves from fear of the vehemence and impatience of the instructor.

S. That adds to the bad habit. The confident man alone can let himself go. Whoever is afraid, will stiffen himself, may he be afraid of falling off or of the instructor's displeasure. I will not mention actual ill treatment which used to be part of the training, but is no longer so in our army. Fear of mere scolding by the instructor suffices to cause stiffening.

H. Or the fear of punishment. I have seen troop commanders order men from the school into confinement on account of awkward riding.

S. They deserved the arrest themselves. Whoever loses patience in riding, may deprive himself in one hour of the fruits of two weeks' work, not only as remount rider, but also as recruit instructor.

H. I presume that you place much value on individual riding of recruits.

S. Individual riding is one of the most important things for all manner of riding, whatever may be the stage of training of man and horse.

H. When should the individual riding of the recruit begin and the training "en bloc," as you call it, cease?

S. As soon as the recruit has gained some confidence and firmness on the horse.

H. Even in the period of preparation of which we were speaking just now, and which may last for months before the seat is confirmed?

S. Certainly, even then!

H. How is the soldier to guide the horse if he has not yet learned how to hold and manage the reins?

S. Let him ride with very loose reins and tell him only to pull the right rein when he wants to turn to the right, and the left when he wants to turn to the left, and leave the rest to the horse. In a few days the greater

part of the men will be so far advanced, that it is no longer necessary to have all the recruits move within the square one in rear of the other, which kills the spirit. They are then combined in small groups depending on the number of men who are capable of riding at the head and leading the way, and after that each one by himself.

H. What are the others doing meanwhile?

S. They halt, correct their seat, go through the exercises at a halt, practise mounting and dismounting, or move at a walk with double rank distance and go through the exercises while in motion.

H. That has the advantage that at the beginning the recruit does not become so much fatigued and that "riding throughout the hour" is avoided, on which fact much stress is laid in the riding instructions, for the time of instruction is apportioned among the individuals.

S. That is another of the advantages of individual riding of recruits. The main point, however, is that the instructor can keep his eye better on each man, than when the latter rides as one of a group, and that he can correct faults before they become confirmed. Then it becomes of equal importance that the man be early made conscious that riding means mastering, and that the horse must go where he guides it. For these reasons the recruit learns more in the short time allotted to him for individual riding, than if he had been on the go throughout the hour behind the rest of the squad.

H. On the other hand, riding in squads cannot be entirely dispensed with, when all recruits are to be taken in hand singly.

S. No. Both should go hand in hand throughout the entire time of the recruit's instruction in riding. In the time of the "preparatory exercises," as they are called in the riding instructions, riding in squads serves to render the recruit capable, by steadily increasing lessons, to keep a correctly encompassing seat, and individual riding serves to instruct him in detail and to kill errors of seat in the germ. During the period of the recruit's further training individual riding forms the training proper, and riding in squads with distances merely becomes the proof of the example and means of regulating the rate of the several paces.

H. I should think that riding in squads within the square with distances must also be a good touchstone, if it be the proof of the example, and that it is therefore not to be entirely rejected at inspection.

S. On the contrary! The inspector must see the riding within the square with distances to prove the example. Only the inspection should not be limited to the riding within the square, nor should the whole year be devoted to coaching for riding on the riding square. In that way the aim of the cavalry training would be missed entirely. Every day, and especially when they have progressed in the application of the aids by rein and thigh, the men should be given an opportunity to disperse on the most extensive possible ground and exercise (tummeln) their horses individually. They remain, of course, under observation. That should be kept up after the recruits have been placed in ranks.

Now and then a man should be called up whom for one reason or

another the instructor wishes to take in hand. Again, he should call the squad together to inspect the gaits and convince himself of the precision of the riding.

In this manner you will educate men who will be at home in the saddle, and keep your horses fresh.

H. You spoke of riding on an extensive ground, indicating that you mean the recruits to ride in the open. Yet you said the last time that the covered school was for remounts and recruits.

S. Whenever the weather in any way permits, it is more beneficial to recruits and horses, for their training as well as for their health, to ride in the open. When the cold makes the fingers stiff and the man can no longer feel the reins, when the feet pain from frost and this pain diverts attention, when the ground is frozen hard and rough so that horses will go lame on it, riding in the open ceases to be of benefit to the recruits, and then you resort to the school. But there they should ride exactly as I have just explained for the open.

H. How far do you think the recruit can be got in the art of riding proper, before he is placed in the ranks in the spring?

S. Not a bit farther than the exercises in the first part of the riding instructions. Artistic side lessons are under no circumstances to be permitted. Lessons on the double trail are entirely to be avoided. The men cannot be sufficiently advanced for them. It would simply result in senseless "kniebeln" of the horses and render them disobedient and dull to the aids. The men should be habituated to leaving the horses alone when they obey. Artistic tricks are not needed for cavalry service. Except closing in, dressing back and turning short, they do not need anything. We should be content if the men learn how to bring the horses up to, and keep them at, the bit. That in itself requires very good horses and attentive, intelligent men. Nothing else is needed for exercising and controlling their horses. This latter is a requisite for the mounted man's efficiency, otherwise cavalry cannot make a compact charge, nor can the men control their horses for rallying and for the individual combat. The superiority of the cavalry of Frederick the Great consisted in this, that every man had learned how to ride, *i.e.*, how to control the horse. The efficient riding of the men made the vehement closed charges possible which overthrew the opponent. The then manner of charging has been lost, because the men are now too little exercised in practical riding and drill.

H. In this respect your views are diametrically opposed to those of General von Schmidt, for he demanded "the further training of the recruit in side paces," and "that they be early taken in hand."

S. If by "early" he means that they be taken in hand before the recruit has learned how to drill with the squadron, his views are, it is true, diametrically opposed not only to my views, based on long practical experience in the service, but also to the first precepts of the riding instructions, which limit the scope of the recruit's training previous to his being placed in ranks, and confine it to the exercises of the first part. Up to that

time the recruit instructor has therefore no authority to teach side paces. But that is not at all what the general means. He said it when he gave orders for the individual combat and these orders fall in the months of March (73), June (72), and July (65 and 73), were therefore given for the period of summer exercises, during which the recruit is in the ranks.

In the discussion of the selection of remount riders I told you that it was necessary to instruct the recruit selected for the purpose, in the aids and their object, on trained horses. In this I am in accord with the instructions and with Schmidt. For he says: "In order that they may learn and progress." It is not possible that he should demand that all recruits, even those whose progress in riding has not been satisfactory, should learn the higher lessons of riding; if it should be his intention that in learning the aids the recruits should train their horses over again, I consider him in error, for they can but mistrain them. Do not forget that I mean them to have the best trained, steadiest horses in the whole squadron.

H. I need not ask, since I know from your views formerly expressed, whether you consider training in the long gallop and the long-continued gallop (drill gallop) as the crown of the instruction in riding, for recruits no less than for remounts.

S. Certainly.

H. And when do you mean to begin with it?

S. It would be very nice indeed if I could begin before the weather drives the recruits into the covered school. There are years, take the winter just passed, when we can use large grounds in the open until January, and when recruits and remounts are not consigned to the school until February and March. In other winters it is different.

H. In no case would recruits be allowed to ride the drill gallop in the covered school.

S. No more than the remounts, on account of the many corners, particularly in small schools, in which the horses would simply be ridden lame. As soon, however, as spring permits to go into the open, the drill gallop should be practised systematically with increasing duration, that the horses may get in good wind and the recruits learn to feel at home in it.

H. The medium gallop alone should, then, be ridden in the school.

S. To teach the recruits how to diminish and increase the gait. Instruction how to increase and diminish the gait, in trot, too, forms one of the principal means of training, in order to impart to the recruits a correct conception of aids by rein and leg, and to give them an idea of what is meant when it is required that the horse in position should be lightly in hand.

H. Does not the circle also form a good means of training in order to show the recruits the effects of the rein in turning?

S. The prescribed circle of six paces diameter is a severe test for man and horse. It should be required of thoroughly instructed men only. Incorrectly ridden it is injurious to the horse as well as to the production

of the correct horseman's feeling. Now and then a man will jerk his horse around in an unreasonable and brutal manner to avoid collision with his rear or front man, and if he is not detected and corrected he gets an idea that he did the thing right.

In most cases the circle is required much too soon in squads and with six paces diameter. It should be done very carefully. When the men are taken in hand singly, larger circles, enlarging and diminishing of the circle, should form the beginning, and it is not until every man by himself can ride them correctly that the proof of the example should be made as soon as it is possible to ride on a larger square in the open.

H. We have, I believe, touched upon nearly everything a recruit is required to learn before he can be placed in the ranks for drill. I admit that your demands are not very high, that you have sufficient time to render any haste in the first preparatory exercises for confirming the seat, unnecessary.

S. Do not forget that I do not demand much in quantity, but all the more in quality, and that it requires a very skilful division of time allotted to riding in order to go to work in individual riding as thoroughly as I want it. If, however, you mean to exhaust everything the recruit has to learn before he is fit for the ranks, we have omitted several important matters.

H. And they are?

S. Instruction in, and development of, the full gallop, riding in broken ground, overcoming obstacles, rallying, and use of arms.

The overcoming of obstacles is the keystone of the structure by means of which confidence in himself and in his horse is instilled in the recruit, without which he cannot possess that intrepidity, that fearlessness, which is indispensable to the cavalry soldier.

It is absolutely necessary that the taking of obstacles be first practised in individual riding, and not in squads. You may frequently observe that the obstacles are taken in squads only, the horses jumping after their leaders in spite of the most awkward aids, as does a flock of sheep after the bell-wether, when the latter is thrown into the pond. It spoils the horse and gives false notions to the recruit.

When the man once knows how in the medium trot, medium and drill gallop, the horse should go in balance and with light and confident leaning on the hand, and when he begins to feel at home on its back at all gaits, then let him ride toward the obstacle without reins at a steady but energetic pace, and the horse will jump over without special aids. In the jump he should rather give the horse its head than interfere with it in any way with the reins. Nor should the obstacles be too great in the beginning. When the recruit has recognised that nothing special is required, he will soon gain confidence in leaping and enjoy it. That is evident from the fact that when permitted to exercise his horse at will, he will often take the obstacles of his own accord. Not before this period may larger obstacles be attempted.

I don't like to see the men take obstacles in squads, one in rear of



the other, with distances. I prefer to lead them across in a swarm with intervals as a preparation for jumping in close formation.

H. In that case the squad will look like a field getting away with hounds.

S. About so, but with this difference, that they strictly observe and retain the same pace, be it trot (300 paces), or gallop (500 paces), and avoid rushing and racing.

In the same manner the squad should be frequently instructed in broken ground.

The recruit here learns to entrust himself to his horse with confidence, to guide it lightly by the rein, let it choose its own way of overcoming the difficulties, and to give it no aids beyond throwing back the upper part of his body when the horse stumbles. He will then become aware how much the horse will do when not interfered with by the rider.

H. The same holds true of climbing.

S. It should also be included, and the rider needs to do nothing else beyond shifting his centre of gravity forward or back in climbing up or down hill without changing the middle part of his body, a thing the rider has learned through mounted gymnastics.

H. It also implies that the horses while being broken as remounts, have learned how to go over difficult ground independently in this manner.

S. I again remind you that the recruits are riding the best horses in the squadron, and which horses I presume to have learned how to go across all kinds of country. The greatest perfection in this manner of remount training can, of course, be reached only if the squadron, recruits, and remounts, old men and horses, have been trained for several successive years in the manner pointed out by me. It should be aimed at from the beginning, otherwise the greatest warlike efficiency would never be reached.

H. You mentioned rallying as one of the subjects of training.

S. It is one of the most essential requirements of cavalry that it should have learned to rally quickly in order to be useful before the enemy, and capable of achieving the highest results. It is an incontrovertible principle, acknowledged by cavalry leaders of all times, that in the cavalry combat a closed reserve should always be kept in hand, with which to bring about a decision at the most critical moment. The last reserve must, however, be thrown into the fight, otherwise it would be just as well not to have any.

What then? If the squadrons and regiments first thrown into the fight are experienced in rallying quickly, they become, after rallying, the closed body in the leader's hand. If they are not, he is without a reserve. There are other emergencies that are liable to arise and make quick rallying a matter of importance.

H. You need not prove to me the importance of the ability of the whole squadron to rally quickly. No one disputes it. Only I thought it was a subject of practice on the part of the formed squadron and did not belong to the period of recruit training. You mean to have the recruits

practised in rallying on the sounding of assembly, as soon as spring weather permits riding in the open.

S. That is far too late! It should be begun on the first day on which the recruit joins the squadron; at first, of course, dismounted. No falling in for drill, no call should be allowed to pass without practising the men in assembling quickly and in good order and in finding the place where each belongs. When the men are so far advanced in individual riding that they may be allowed to exercise ("tummeln") their horses by themselves and at will, they should never be assembled in any other way than upon the signal or call of assembly. Now at the trot, then in the drill gallop with reining in and coming down to a trot near the place of assembly, again for assembling in closed squad stirrup to stirrup, another time with intervals, again for riding within the square with distances, the leaders trotting, etc., depending on what it is desired to take in hand next. One should be inventive and vary the exercise a good deal in order to habituate the men to ride with their heads. It is only in this way that the whole squadron will be able to rally quickly without the men bumping into each other and laming the horses by awkward checking, or rushing into ranks.

H. As to the use of arms, I believe you will have nothing special to say. At least I know that the two cavalry regiments which once formed part of my command, attached proper weight to it and practised it industriously, so that I was often delighted with their efficiency in this branch, as I mentioned once before.

S. I wish to congratulate every regiment of which that is true. I believe, however, that not a few fall short of what may be accomplished. Our western neighbours have mostly, including past times, been superior to us Germans in this respect. Yet the use of arms is the main thing in the employment of cavalry in battle. What will a cavalry accomplish, however well it may ride, if it has learned neither to cut nor thrust and does not hurt a hair of, or, at best, gives a few bruises to, the enemy whom it has overthrown by the shock? It will simply be cannon and musket fodder, and it is a pity for its good material and rational riding.

The use of arms in all kinds of situations should be most industriously practised, not as a mere exhibition for inspection, but also in individual riding and "tummeln." It is not necessary that all the men be trained to be fencing masters. It is merely requisite that they cut with the edge and hit the spot aimed at. The sabre is a splendid arm, which has lost in prestige recently simply because not enough attention is paid to vigorous and sharp cutting.

Nor should thrusting be neglected. Here, too, it should be observed that the thrust be vigorous and short, and that the men hit the point aimed at. Tricks are likewise unnecessary here because beyond the capacity of the great mass.

Individual combat should be practised, not in indicated rounds between Nos. 1 and 2, the old unprofitable scheme, but in the manner pointed out by General von Schmidt.

H. Thus it was done in the regiments of which I spoke. The recruits chased each other over the hurdles in the "jeu de barre" and each had to learn how to defend the kerchief.

S. I can only repeat that I congratulate the regiment.

H. One more remark. When the recruits finish their training as such and are placed in ranks, somebody must give judgment whether they have sufficiently progressed, and that is possible only through a final riding inspection, be it made by the general, the colonel or squadron commander. The recruit instructor himself is not competent to render an objective judgment.

S. Do not talk to me of final riding inspections. I dislike to hear the word mentioned. Immediately I see quadrilles according to programme, coaching, stencil work, etc. The superiors are the ones to inspect frequently, very frequently, as much, and when, and what they choose. But they should come unexpectedly. They should inspect according to the degree of training of the recruit. If possible they should be present only during the lessons. Afterward they may let the men ride within the square and then send individuals here or there, over obstacles, across country, to convince themselves that the men control the horses. But they should not look upon the riding school inspection as the crown of riding.

H. You have said yourself, that the recruits arrive on a certain day and must be fit for the ranks by a certain day in the spring. Somebody must verify whether they are far enough advanced.

S. Such final riding inspections have the additional disadvantage, that they are necessarily held in a superficial manner. According to the regulations established by our highest authority, the regimental commander is responsible for the training in detail. He is to make the final riding inspections, if they are to be made. In order to apply in his judgment of the several squadrons the most uniform possible measure, he inspects them as near together in point of time as possible, i.e., the five squadrons on five successive days. He thus sees 135 horses five times in five days. If he wants to observe each individual, his attention becomes relaxed, and finally he sees nothing at all. Nothing then remains but to shorten the time allowed for each squad, and give judgment *en bloc* by allowing thirty or forty minutes to each squad and letting them work in the square according to programme.

On the other hand, if he is present with one or two squads each day and continues to be throughout the winter, he may gain a correct idea of each rider without overdoing it or overfatiguing himself; he can "individualise" and see each horse and rider often enough to form a correct judgment and interfere by timely advice.

H. That is well and good during the training. Spring is approaching now. The squadron is to be formed, say, on May 1st. Who, in your opinion, is to state on April 30th that the recruits are sufficiently advanced? Whoever it may be, he must convince himself and make a—final inspection.

S. What of the squadron that is to be formed on May 1st? May not war break out just as well between October 1st and May 1st? Would you like to see the squadron dissolved during seven months and fit for war during five months only? The squadron should constantly remain formed; without the recruits it is simply weaker by forty men than with recruits. The latter are placed in ranks on a certain date. Let us say on May 1st. It would not be rational to place them all in ranks on a fixed day. Many a recruit will be able to drill with the older men by April 20th, others not before May 10th, the laggards still later.

I like to have it done this way: the troop commander knows his recruits and sees them every day. He says to-day: Peter can drill with the squadron from now on, Paul to-morrow, so may Jack and Mike, etc.

H. Two or three recruits will finally be left, and if accident wills it so, one from each squad if there were three or four squads originally; is it not a waste of energy to keep up the apparatus of instructors, or are the reduced squads combined in one and do the pupils change instructors? This course would have grave disadvantages and would interfere with the continuity of instruction.

S. Does the recruit cease to be a recruit simply because he rides with the older men in the squadron? Does he not remain a recruit throughout the year? Hence, on account of, and for the purpose of, his instruction he should have the same instructor throughout the year. The squadron would do well not to drill two or three hours every day. The older riders may take a turn on the square and exercise ("tummeln") their horses singly, go through the exercises with arms, etc. The squadron commander should during the first or last half-hour of drill take the squadron together for carrying out drill movements, wherein those recruits participate who are sufficiently advanced, while the recruit instructor utilises this time to devote himself specially to the laggards.

H. I think not only the recruits, but also the older riders, each separately, are combined in the squadron in the spring.

S. Unfortunately that practice obtains in most regiments, and that is the very thing to which I object in the management of our service.

H. In what way would you like to see it changed?

S. Of that we will speak the next time in the discussion of the further training of man and horse.

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### THIRTEENTH CONVERSATION. (APRIL 181H, 1886.)

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#### OF THE SUBSEQUENT TRAINING OF THE OLDER MEN AND HORSES.

H. You said the last time you did not approve of the idea of forming the squadron anew each spring from the riding squads, and that the squadron should remain formed throughout the winter.

S. That is my opinion.

H. When the reserves have been dismissed and the recruits are not yet sufficiently advanced to drill with the squadron, the latter becomes so small as to cease to be a squadron.

S. It always is a squadron, though a weak one; what does that mean? We assumed forty recruits per year (including one one-year volunteer) as a high figure. For these we need thirty-nine service horses, for the one-year volunteer furnishes his own mount. Two contingents of remounts numbering twenty-six horses must be deducted, total, sixty-five, leaving seventy horses for the formed squadron.

H. You forget the twenty-six remount riders, the trumpeters and non-commissioned officers.

S. The twenty-six remount riders (if we have that number) must ride old horses in addition to the remounts, otherwise they cannot remain firm riders. Nor should we forget that there are some recruits from the previous year who need additional training in riding. Let us calculate the number of horses first, that of the men afterward. If we wish to drill merely, we may form a squadron of three troops from the seventy horses, if in the number of the most indispensable non-commissioned officers we limit ourselves to those on the flanks, that is, six, four trumpeters, and eleven files per platoon (inclusive of two blank files), or twenty riders.

H. A single sick or detached horse will throw out this calculation.

S. Not at all. I simply take an additional blank file.

H. Schmidt does not approve that.

S. For the great divisional exercises, and there I concur with him. For exercise within the squadron he wishes to have drill in single rank diligently practised. He would, then, not object to a few blank files in that case. I have another reason, however, why I would not like to form the squadron of seventy horses in three platoons of eleven files, which is the usual formation during winter.

H. What is your reason?

S. I would be limited to the six flank non-commissioned officers besides depriving the remaining nine non-commissioned officers of their horses. My idea is to give the squadron that formation in which it would have to take the field, and there each of the fifteen non-commissioned officers must have his horse which, moreover, he should ride throughout the winter. Hence it would be exceptional only that I would turn out with the squadron formed in three troops to go through some drill movements; I would form it definitely in two troops in double rank, or in four troops in single rank. I have enough horse for that purpose, though some may have to be deducted on account of detached service or sickness, for after allowing for fifteen non-commissioned officers' horses and four trumpeters' horses, there remain fifty-one horses for the other riders.

H. The idea of forming the squadron in four troops in single rank is an excellent one. It would enable us to have drill in single rank during winter as advocated by Schmidt, without being thereby much of the time allotted to drill. Would you not rather form the squadron in single

rank anyway, until the recruits join it, who then might ride in the rear rank?

S. That sounds very pretty, but is impracticable, because for steady drill we need other riders in the rear rank also, specially for the guide file of each troop.

Furthermore, if the squadron rides in single rank for six months, the men will lose eye for, and practice in, the observance of distances in wheeling by troops.

H. Because there is no rear rank; that is true. It did not occur to me. I suppose you also agree that the troops should not be less than eleven files on account of the distances.

S. Theoretically drill with ten files per troop is impossible, because in that case (including troop leader and his distance) there would be greater depth than front; in practice, however, it is otherwise. It is practicable with ten files. Let us, however, take eleven files as a basis. I, for one, would rather drill with eleven than with ten files.

H. How will you get the riders of the fifty-one horses with which you are going to drill during the winter?

S. We have 133 men in the squadron, from which are to be deducted fifteen non-commissioned officers, four trumpeters, eight men, on an average, detached from the regiment, four officers' servants, two per cent sick, i.e., one or two men, five men for guard, kitchen and other interior service, lastly, thirty-nine recruits, total, seventy-seven men, which leaves us fifty-six.

H. Then you have five men more in the squadron than horses, and you cannot have every man ride every day. That has its disadvantages. It will not be possible to have each remount rider ride daily an old horse in addition to the remount.

S. I shall take good care not to let the select, best riders get out of practice of how to ride a trained horse. Other losses must also be taken in account. There are the tradesmen of the squadron who do not ride every day, also men detailed away from the regiment, as for instance, "du jour ordonnances" (daily messenger details), etc., etc., and lastly, I would rather have the worst riders change off, and not ride every day, than let the best riders get rusty.

H. These best riders are kept in practice by their remounts.

S. They might very easily acquire a faulty seat and, particularly if serving in the second year, need daily practice on a trained horse to confirm the correct rider feeling. Some old, firm, excellent riders (non-commissioned officers), who on account of their reputation have an opportunity to ride officers' horses within and without the regiment, are the only ones whom I might excuse from riding each day an old horse in addition to the remount, if I have not enough horses.

H. In the number of horses you have not allowed for the sick, though you have in the number of men.

S. Because the sick horse would balance the sick man, but not the reverse. The whole calculation, however, is an approximation, and subject



to many variations. For instance, when the number of recruits and remount riders is smaller, so that some of the latter have to ride two horses daily. Then I need fewer old horses for the remount riders and recruits.

H. Very well. Let us take our squadron as consisting of seventy horses during the winter. Are you not afraid you are acting contrary to all our previous old traditions in not dividing the older men and horses into riding squads? Is it not necessary to confirm the riding proficiency proper after the great summer exercises? Do you think that the recruits of the past year will not need additional training? Do you think that after undergoing two years' training the remounts are so firm (excepting laggards) that they can serve eight further years and drill continually without being gone over again? Does not Schmidt demand that even the riders of the first class—according to the then riding instructions—i.e., now the smaller of the two classes, work their horses over again during the winter?

S. You are asking a great many questions at once.

In the first place, I have not said at all that I would not divide the older riders into "rides," because I form them in a small squadron during the winter. I no more mean to omit that, than to fail to do away with the division into "rides" during spring and summer after the recruits have been placed in ranks. Schmidt demands expressly that the division into "rides" be kept up during the summer. Why should I not demand that the squadron remain formed during the winter when the riding under supervision of the squad instructors is chiefly practised?

With this demand I am not in opposition to a single one of our old traditions. On the contrary, I am following an old tradition from the glorious period of the cavalry. The squadrons of the great king remained ready for war as such throughout the year, and it did not prevent them from turning out for riding. You may infer that from the ungracious remark of the king mentioned by Marwitz, as you stated yourself. The king said: "Who is in charge of the riding of the squadron?" Do you think that there was no individual riding under supervision of the squad instructors? The squadron commander, lieutenant, cornet, or first sergeant, whoever was in charge, could not by himself have superintended the riding of the whole squadron.

H. Each instructor no doubt had his own squad. Last autumn you invited my attention to the essay: "A Visit to Ohlau in 1772," which appeared in No. 41 of the official publication, "The Comrade," on October 10th, 1885. There the Saxon officer who visited Seidlitz, reports that in the evening after the horses had been taken to water, "each rider took a turn around the place at a gallop and finished by taking some obstacles at full speed and with ease." The report continues: "All the officers were assembled on the place dismounted. They followed attentively the movements of each rider, correcting here, remedying there, and advising."

In the morning the general drilled; he commanded everything him-

self and for an hour—that was the duration of the drill—not a word was spoken or movement made except by his order.

S. I wish we could turn out twice each day, once in the morning for an hour of drill, and once for another hour, more conveniently appointed, for individual riding and “tummeln.” Besides the distance of the drill ground from the stables there are many other circumstances which prevent us from doing so in most garrisons.

As for the rest we can do just as Seidlitz did. Drill and individual riding on the same day.

Both the formed squadron and riding in squads should go on at the same time throughout the year, summer and winter. I can see no reason why this approved practice of the great king has been departed from.

H. Simply because of the adoption of universal liability to three years' service and the resulting reduction of the squadron after furloughing the reserves.

S. We know that that is not a good reason. Any way we can drill in the school of the squadron with four troops in double rank, however reduced the squadron may be. All we have to do is to combine several squadrons for the purpose.

H. Not often, let us hope. The squadron must form a unit by itself.

S. Certainly! Not often, perhaps twice or thrice during the winter. As to your question regarding additional training of recruits and old remounts of the past year, no one could be better convinced of its necessity than I am. But it can also be done if the squadron turns out formed as such, and on the drill ground is divided into rides.

I am, however, decidedly opposed to retraining and tormenting every year, as is universally done, all well-trained horses which are firm in their paces, for it simply results in harm to them. It is useless cruelty to animals and, what is worse, the main ideas of riding which were imparted to the recruit with so much care are also ruined.

H. How so?

S. If a man is to give additional training to a well-trained horse, he is apt, without being able to account for it, to get the idea that the horse is not going well enough, and that the rider feeling heretofore experienced is not the correct one. Thus he is taught to play at trainer, to “kniebeln,” to work backward, when it would be well to reward the horse for its accomplishments by leaving it alone. The man is therefore taught something wrong, to mistrain instead of to ride.

H. I cannot rid myself of the idea that it will be quite necessary for many horses to be gone over thoroughly once more during the winter.

S. You express there a truth in exact form. Some horses need it very much, but not all of them. Hence in individual riding of squads of old men on old horses during winter, those alone which need it should be bent to it by preparatory exercises or any other means you may choose, but never all the horses; nor should bunglers ever be placed on horses to

be retrained, but, on the contrary, the very best riders. Those lessons should be applied which tend to eradicate the difficulties named. The training should, however, not be "en bloc," nor should the whole squad be put through all of the second part of the riding instructions. Least of all should the two illustrations of the presentation of a squad for inspection, which are given on pages 195 and 196, be worked into a scheme "F," in conformity to which the whole year's work is regulated, and for which coaching is done *ad nauseam*, as is so often the case during the last few months.

Whatever riders be detailed to train, to bend, should train and bend if they know how, but only where it is necessary. Whoever is not ordered to train or does not know how, should leave it alone and simply ride, or learn how to ride properly, of which he probably will stand in need.

H. You would not, then, permit the riders of the late first riding class, i.e., now the smaller squads of the second riding class, to work their horses all over again during the winter as advocated by Schmidt.

S. I entirely disagree with Schmidt on that point. The riders of the (late) first riding class should not be allowed to do any training. Those alone who are sufficiently progressed, may be instructed how to train. It is conceivable that toward the end of the first year of his service some recruit may prove suitable, if he has learned riding before his entry in the service, or has special ability. Whoever at the end of the first year of service is relegated into the (late) first riding class, should never be permitted to train, simply because he cannot do it. I mentioned to you once before that Schmidt's greatness consisted rather in his ability as drill master of large bodies, than in correct views on the details of training.

H. I was told that he was so infinitely zealous and indefatigable as to forget everything else. It is said of him that as regimental commander he once had his trumpeters ride in the school, got warmed up, and remained in the school until late in the evening, entirely forgetting a party he had invited to his house for the evening.

S. It is wrong in itself to become so interested and forgetful as to remain so many hours in the school with the same squad. Any expert rider knows that one or two horses may be ruined in this manner in a single day, in fact, more easily so than if there had been drill twice as long in the open.

H. I am curious to know how you wish the winter riding of the older men on the older horses managed, when they are doubly divided, into a squadron of two troops in double rank, or four troops in single rank, and also in rides, each under its riding instructor.

S. Not at all differently from the service method observed by the squadron during the summer, when a special service is prescribed for it; it would drill as a unit, practise individual riding under the supervision of the riding instructors, or make the proof of the example by a short ride within the square. The difference would chiefly be this, that during the winter the drill in the school of the squadron would not be so frequent

and long as in summer, though during the latter the squadron commander would also have to consider every day as lost for his riders on which they have not practised their horses in individual riding. One or two drills per week with the whole squadron would suffice in winter, drills lasting not more than half-an-hour and taking place before or after the squadron is divided up among the instructors.

H. Would you arrange the rides according to the efficiency of man and horse?

S. In the manner heretofore pursued by all intelligent squadron commanders. The average number of riders in the same ride depends on the number of remounts received each year, which is thirteen.

H. Thus you get eleven rides in the squadron, each of twelve or thirteen horses. Of these rides the remounts constitute two, i.e., the old and young remounts, the recruits form three, leaving six among which the seventy older horses would be divided.

On what basis would you assign them to the other riders?

S. In the first place I would give the old remounts of the year just preceding to the oldest and most expert remount riders to be ridden in addition to the young remounts, unless they have lagged behind and are to undergo another course of training with this year's old remounts. That may be the case with weakly horses and such as are behind in their bodily development; it is less apt to be the case the more the old remounts of the year just preceding were spared during the great summer exercises. To this squad should also be assigned the horse or horses of older contingents which have been spoiled during the summer by poor riding and need a thorough retraining. Some of them may have to be specially taken in hand by themselves. The longer, however, the squadron adheres to these principles, the fewer will be the horses of older contingents which need retraining.

Specially well-developed and firmly-going horses of last year's old remounts may, on the contrary, be placed in the next higher ride.

H. The second ride of older riders would then probably consist of the junior half of the twenty-six remount riders, who would train the old remounts of the current year and mount those horses also which had been old remounts in the last year but one.

S. Something like that, though there may be special exceptions, for instance, if some horse of the old remounts of two years ago should show such firm training as to make it available as recruit horse. In its place the ride might take charge of a horse of the older contingents which needs retraining, but not to the same extent as the horse assigned to the first ride of remount riders.

H. You assumed two, or, at the most, four horses as requiring retraining.

S. Apparently, yes; in fact, however, it is different. Most of the horses requiring retraining will usually be found among the old remounts of one or two years ago, and are therefore counted in among those horses which are ridden by the twenty-six best riders of the squadron in the third

or fourth years of their service. Having been carefully trained for four years by the best riders of the squadron, I should think the horses ought to be so firm, that they cannot be easily spoiled by unskilful riders. Horses are usually spoiled by awkward riders through stupid "kniebeln" and training, because the non-expert rider does not know how, when, and wherefore to train. If great care is taken, as I have explained, that the recruits and poor riders among the older men ride only with correct seat, refrain from all "kniebeln" and training by rein, never hang on by the reins, or give any aids with them but for the purpose of getting the horse lightly up to the bit, none of the older horses once thoroughly trained are apt to be spoiled so as to need retraining.

H. To what riders would you assign the next older horses, which have been more than four years with the squadron?

S. Among the horses of the earlier contingents which are in their fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth years of service, the best-trained and freshest are to be found. Exceptionally some horses may remain fresh on their legs for a longer period, just as they may lose in freshness at an earlier period. With these exceptions, the contingents named will probably contain the horses from which the recruit horses may and should be selected.

H. From these five contingents, i.e., more than sixty horses, you would select the thirty-nine best for the recruits?

S. The best trained and which, at the same time, are perfectly fresh on their legs. In order that the recruit may gain a correct rider feeling, it is necessary that he do not receive his first training on a numb or stiff horse.

As to the degree of training, it is necessary that his horse be thoroughly trained and obedient to the aids.

It must obey the leg, in order that it may respond when the rider is to be taught how to gather the horse for an active gait.

No fear need be entertained lest the horse lose its obedience to the leg through its employment as recruit horse. For it remains in practice in point of obedience to leg, since the recruit must constantly use his leg in riding the turnings as well as the gait ordered, thus preserving the horse's obedience. The instructor should carefully see to it that the recruit rides with his legs. Otherwise obedience may be converted into disobedience, the horses become hard, pull, and bolt.

The same results, if the men are taught how, or permitted, to "kniebel" with the reins and try their hand in side paces. If retraining becomes necessary, it should be entrusted to the most expert men, never to recruits.

H. I suppose you wish to have the same principles for selecting the horses carried out in the case of those of last year's recruits who, for some reason, are behindhand in their training and have to be re-assigned to the recruit squad for retraining. Not many horses are needed for that purpose. If I remember right there were but one or three such men on an average.

and long as in summer, though during the latter the squadron commander would also have to consider every day as lost for his riders on which they have not practised their horses in individual riding. One or two drills per week with the whole squadron would suffice in winter, drills lasting not more than half-an-hour and taking place before or after the squadron is divided up among the instructors.

H. Would you arrange the rides according to the efficiency of man and horse?

S. In the manner heretofore pursued by all intelligent squadron commanders. The average number of riders in the same ride depends on the number of remounts received each year, which is thirteen.

H. Thus you get eleven rides in the squadron, each of twelve or thirteen horses. Of these rides the remounts constitute two, i.e., the old and young remounts, the recruits form three, leaving six among which the seventy older horses would be divided.

On what basis would you assign them to the other riders?

S. In the first place I would give the old remounts of the year just preceding to the oldest and most expert remount riders to be ridden in addition to the young remounts, unless they have lagged behind and are to undergo another course of training with this year's old remounts. That may be the case with weakly horses and such as are behind in their bodily development; it is less apt to be the case the more the old remounts of the year just preceding were spared during the great summer exercises. To this squad should also be assigned the horse or horses of older contingents which have been spoiled during the summer by poor riding and need a thorough retraining. Some of them may have to be specially taken in hand by themselves. The longer, however, the squadron adheres to these principles, the fewer will be the horses of older contingents which need retraining.

Specially well-developed and firmly-going horses of last year's old remounts may, on the contrary, be placed in the next higher ride.

H. The second ride of older riders would then probably consist of the junior half of the twenty-six remount riders, who would train the old remounts of the current year and mount those horses also which had been old remounts in the last year but one.

S. Something like that, though there may be special exceptions, for instance, if some horse of the old remounts of two years ago should show such firm training as to make it available as recruit horse. In its place the ride might take charge of a horse of the older contingents which needs retraining, but not to the same extent as the horse assigned to the first ride of remount riders.

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S. At present, when all the older men are assigned to the second riding class, and such only of last year's recruits as are behindhand are to be consigned to the first riding class, the advisability has become apparent of extending this regulation to a greater number of men. They are habitually formed into a separate ride, ranging from ten to thirteen horses.

H. If this squad "rides with the recruits," you will have to deduct them from the squadron, since they cannot turn out with it in the current winter when the small squadron is formed for drill.

S. Why not? They have drilled with the squadron during the past summer. I might distribute them at first among the recruit squads as leaders to give the recruits a certain support, until the latter no longer fall off and can guide their horses to some extent. After that it would be better to combine these last year's recruits, who are riding with the new recruits, in a separate squad.

H. It is true, they are ahead of the recruits by six weeks' additional training between the conclusion of the autumn manoeuvres and the beginning of November, since the recruits do not arrive until November 1st, and hardly get on horseback before November 6th or 7th.

S. There are six precious weeks during which they can learn much to rid themselves of defects which have become apparent during their first year of service. Soon after the arrival of the recruits they will probably again be fit to ride with saddle and stirrup, which does not preclude that during those six weeks they turn out with saddle and stirrup on those days, when the squadron commander wants to drill in the school of the squadron for half-an-hour.

H. How would you make up the last riding squads, all of which, under the new riding instructions, belong to the second riding class?

S. Here I will begin at the bottom. The horses still remaining will—with some exceptions, of course—be, in the main, the oldest in the squadron. From them I select those which show signs of numbness and seem, therefore, to be candidates for condemnation. On these old horses I let those of the older men ride alternately, who according to our calculation do not ride every day on account of other service (tradesmen, police, etc.). The remaining old horses I assign to the remaining older men according to their temper, degree of training, and skill in riding, forming them in two rides on the principle that each man retains his horse.

H. Where do the non-commissioned officers, who are not remount riders, and the trumpeters ride?

S. Wherever they belong, according to their skill in riding.

H. Horses and men would then be grouped about as follows:—

1. Young remounts (contingent I.) under the best riders, thirteen horses.
2. Old remounts (contingent II.) under the remaining remount riders, thirteen horses.

3. Last year's old remounts (contingent III.) under the riders under first heading, thirteen horses.
4. Old remounts of two years ago (contingent IV.) under the riders under second heading, thirteen horses.
- 5, 6, and 7. Recruits on horses selected from contingents V. to IX., twelve to fourteen horses per ride.
8. Last year's recruits for additional training with this year's recruits on horses like those in rides 5 to 7, each ten to thirteen horses.
- 9 and 10. Older men on older horses, ten to thirteen horses per ride.
11. Men who do not ride daily, on horses which will probably be condemned the next inspection, ten to thirteen horses.

S. That would about express the principle to be followed; I must add, however, that any exception should be made which circumstances, skill in riding, degree of training, etc., render necessary.

H. In the hussar regiment of the division which I commanded, there was a squadron which took particular pride in being able to let the 3rd and 4th contingents of remounts, each in a separate squad, ride in the second class.

S. It shows that very good principles were observed there.

H. On all occasions the squadron showed the highest efficiency in riding. One thing I did not approve of was to make up the rides according to the colour of the horses.

S. That is a hobby in which those only can indulge who have no idea of riding.

H. Now that we have made up the double skeleton which we consider proper for the older men on the older horses in the squadron during winter, I would like to ask you for information on the subject of the kind of service which is to form the continuation of the training of these older men.

We have seventy horses which for riding in squads and for individual riding are divided into rides Nos. 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, and 11, and form a squadron of two double-rank troops, or four single-rank troops of eleven, twelve, or thirteen files.

S. It will not often be practicable to form thirteen files, for of the non-commissioned officers we only leave the recruit instructors and those detached at home and all the trumpeters turn out as such, unless they are still riding with the recruits. There are also some detached horses. Thirteen files could be formed only if no horse were sick. That is immaterial however.

H. When and how frequently does the squadron turn out and drill as such?

S. I would make it obligatory to turn out twice a week for drill and once for field service.

H. The time available for confirming the riding would thus be shortened one-half.

S. Not at all. The troop commander should not drill all day. He may drill for half-an-hour in the school of the squadron, and then break up the squadron into riding squads for individual riding. One half-hour twice a week suffices to keep the principles of the drill, inculcated in the squadron during summer, fresh in the mind. Nor need field exercises be carried to the exhaustion of the horses. This service may terminate on the drill ground where individual riding may then be added.

I lay great stress on having individual riding every day. I again remind you of the great king's words: "The day on which the rider has not exercised ("tummeln") his horse, is lost to him." It may be that in October, when some of the officers' problems of field service have yet to be solved, that individual riding cannot be had on such days. They should be counted as field days of the formed squadron.

H. In this individual riding would you have riding in squads with distances?

S. Sometimes it must be had, in all cases, however, merely as proof of the example, and for controlling the gaits.

H. I see another difficulty in the way of carrying out this measure, it is the equipment of man and horse. If all or part of the horses had to be ridden on the snaffle, or if the recruits undergoing additional training ride on the blanket, they cannot be taken out for drill, because there they need the curb.

S. Drill movements can easily be executed with horses on the snaffle. The squadron commander will have to select his evolutions accordingly. As regards the last recruits who resume riding on the blanket, it will do them no harm to ride on those days with saddle and stirrup, as they have drilled before.

H. And on the other days of the week you would simply have riding in the open?

S. And individual riding, whenever practicable; the horses are to be exercised ("tummeln").

H. When would you begin these kinds of exercises of the older men?

S. The very day after our return from the manoeuvres.

H. Would you give no day of rest to the horses at all?

S. No! I consider these pauses which sometimes extend over four or five weeks in September or October, quite harmful to the older horses. It is a tradition not older than this century, that after great exertions horses should have a rest for some time. For five long months in winter from November to March inclusive, the horses are tormented five times one hour per week in the unhealthy atmosphere of the school, and an effort is made to get a hay belly on them so that they may look fat. With weight thus increased, without development of muscles to carry the horse, they are introduced to the fatigues of the spring drill period. They thus become more fatigued than their poorly developed muscles are capable of withstanding. The hay belly disappears, they run down, not the least as the result of the excitement, and nervousness, engendered by faulty training

and treatment. At the termination of the squadron drill period a few weeks' rest is considered necessary to fatten them up again. They are exercised daily for half-an-hour or perhaps ridden as far as the target range. This period of rest is followed by that of regimental, brigade, and division drill and manœuvres, in which again more is demanded from the horses than the poorly-developed muscles and fat lungs can bear. They return from the manœuvres fairly collapsed. Again they are given a rest for some weeks only again to begin duties in an unhealthy manner. What is the result? Great exertions cause the fat, untrained lungs to become diseased. Those horses which emerge from these great exertions well, though fatigued, develop a terrible appetite during the first few subsequent days. They eat hastily and during their time of rest do not get sufficient exercise to regularly digest the food. Thence arise diseases of the digestive organs of a typhoid character, i.e., influenza, which is both epidemic and endemic in character.

H. Once before you referred to the fact that our system of service was producing influenza.

S. And I pointed out at the same time that during the past century in the most flourishing period of cavalry under Frederick the Great, influenza was entirely unknown. The reason was that the king insisted on every horse having at least two hours' exercise each day.

If the horse does not accumulate fat in the lungs and, at the same time, has its muscles strengthened daily by rational exercise, great exertions will not tell on it so much as when it enters a period of severe exertion in fat condition, without muscles or training, and more particularly so if it be in constant conflict with the rider who "kniebels" and mistrains it senselessly and makes it nervous. But at no time is it more in need of two hours of exercise in the open, than when passing from a period of fatigue to one of comparative rest.

For these reasons I consider it advisable to give each horse at least two hours of exercise in the open air as prescribed by the great king. I would like to include even Sunday.

H. It would be contrary to our ideas of keeping the Sabbath.

S. Does not the cook cook on Sunday, does not the domestic wait on you on Sunday and black your boots? Must not the horse be fed and groomed on Sunday? It is not necessary to drill on Sunday, but, as far as permitted by their health, the horses might be taken out for a steady walk early on Sunday morning, before grooming if you wish, or before or after church.

H. If you consider daily exercise in the open necessary, you would at no time consign your recruits and remounts to the school.

S. It is admittedly a great evil that the requirements of training drive these sixty-six horses into the school, whenever the weather precludes instruction in the open. Hence I would not let these horses use the school whenever it can be at all avoided. But I fail to see why I should wilfully allow this evil to affect the older men on the older horses when

it can be avoided. I am of the opinion that during the winter these seventy horses should not be permitted to set foot in the school.

H. How will you ride in the open when the weather forbids?

S. Did the winter ever prevent us from riding in the open during the war of 1870-71? We had to do it and did not allow ourselves to be prevented. The times are long past when both parties went into winter quarters at the appearance of winter and resumed active operations at the opening of the spring.

H. It is true we had a winter campaign in 1814, in 1864 we began a war in the midst of winter, and in 1870-71 an unusually severe winter failed to interrupt active operations on our part. In most recent times the Russians crossed the Balkans in the worst winter weather. In a winter campaign, however, we do not care for loss of material so long as it brings in fair returns. Nor should we forget that the action of cavalry was very much limited in such weather.

S. Unfortunately, yes, and why? Because it had no experience in overcoming the difficulties connected with winter weather.

A number of splendid days can always be found in winter, on which it is simply delightful to ride in the open. When frost has made the newly-fallen snow into a kind of loose sand, the practice grounds are fit for use, nor does the farmer object or send in a bill of damages when we ride over his fields. We then have all the better opportunities to use the ground for field exercises than during the summer or fall after the harvest. For under modern conditions of husbandry the harvest is no sooner brought in, than the ground is at once ploughed and sowed anew.

In your letters on infantry you yourself have pointed out how many days this arm can use in winter for field exercises. So can the cavalry. As regards sparing the horses, I would not demand that in winter weather we ride in the open as long in peace time as we are compelled to in war.

H. There are times in winter when the practice grounds are frozen so hard, that we can ride at a walk at the best and even thus lame some horses. On such days the ploughed and cultivated fields become so rough and inaccessible that, if we enter upon them, we may be reasonably sure of breaking some horses' legs. Nor are the fields covered with snow all winter. The farmer will render a bill for damages if we ride over his sowed fields during frost.

S. At such times I would make practice marches with the squadron of seventy horses, or, still better, with the whole regiment of five such squadrons.

H. The roads are then, as a rule, so smooth that you cannot go riding at all.

S. It is a misfortune that we do not learn how to ride on ice.

It would be a fine testimonial for cavalry, indeed, to state by way of excuse that frost and ice prevented it from pursuing and patrolling during war.

We must learn how to ride on a smooth surface. A steady seat, deep and firm in the saddle, coolness, confidence to the horse which itself



feels uneasy and needs confidence to the rider, guiding by the snaffle, horses' heads straight to the front, low position of hand which should be particularly steady when the horse slips, a specially short pace in trot, the dog trot; these are the rules to be observed. Horse and man must, however, be practised in them, if they are to carry them out in war.

Riding on smoothly frozen ground should not be continued too long at a time, as it is very hard on the tendons; the dog trot is apt to make the joints stiff. A livelier gait should therefore be assumed the moment soft ground is reached.

Sharp frost nails should be used. We have a very good kind of adjustable nail. Do you believe the men will use them properly in war unless they have been taught their correct use in peace? Not even our farriers would learn how to adjust them if we did not use them every winter. There are many special matters to be taken in consideration. They are manufactured in bulk and kept in store; the farrier punches the hole in the shoe, the nail may not go in, or fall out. I have seen such things myself. If the farriers are inexperienced, they will not know how to handle them. The men, on the other hand, should know how to change the blunt for the sharp nail, when the ground calls for a change. Otherwise it may speedily become blunt on hard, rough roads, and useless.

H. When it is very cold I suppose you will not insist on individual riding, for you said yourself when we discussed the training of the recruits, that with stiff fingers they would not profit much from riding in the open.

S. When it is cold and the riding grounds are frozen so hard and rough that I am obliged to relinquish individual riding, I would simply make practice marches until the weather changes.

Just think how much is gained toward warlike efficiency of the men by drilling twice a week during winter, if but half-an-hour each time, and by having one field exercise a week. That will make—I calculate on one month during the winter when the weather will make drill and individual riding impracticable, and my figure is high—twenty-one weeks, i.e., forty-two drill days and twenty-one field exercises between October 1st and April 1st, and includes besides a month of practice marches.

H. During the month devoted to practice marches because the cold prevents other exercises, many noses, ears, and feet will be frozen.

S. For what do we have overcoats with hoods, and gloves? The soldier should learn how to defend himself against cold, otherwise he will succumb to it in war. He must also learn how to ride with his overcoat on. He must be practised in wrapping his stirrups with straw; in war there is no time to learn it. If the available means are put to use, there is no need of freezing. On the contrary, such a ride in the open does one good.

H. There are days when the snow balls. I have seen horses go on stilts as it were, and fall. That would put a stop to riding.

S. In that case I would not ride.

H. Might you not in this way be obliged to leave the seventy old horses of the squadron in the stable for days and weeks at a time?

S. No! Do mail and other public conveyances stop their service for days and weeks on account of the elements? Where the mail and hackman can get through, the trained cavalry soldier will too.

H. Mail and hackmen must, under circumstances, risk the loss of their horses in peace, the cavalry should only in war.

S. For these reasons I admit that there may be days on which it is impossible to ride the horses. But there will not be many successive days of such weather.

H. Sometimes a cold spell lasts quite a long time.

S. Whenever the cold is such that drilling in the open is forbidden by regulations (more than ten degrees below zero Reaumur), it is preferable to take the horses out on the roads for half-an-hour of exercise rather than to confine them to the school and encroach on its use by the remounts and recruits.\*

H. Are you not afraid, lest mere horse exercise make man and horse slouchy?

S. They are not to be permitted to become slouchy.

Many practical exercises may be combined with this horse exercise. Properly utilised it will greatly benefit the squadron.

There is in the first place the riding in the long marching column, requiring much care on the part of the men and great uniformity of pace. It is a good preparation for drill and may be practised for its own sake, for on it depends the success of a charge on emerging from a defile.

The men's proper bearing must not suffer during horse exercise. On the country roads no less than on the riding ground, troop leaders are responsible that the men do not slouch. Supervision over the position is a prerequisite for the attainment of good marching discipline. Horse exercise affords a better opportunity for it than the school. And the better the marching discipline, the more sabres before the enemy.

H. How far do you mean to carry the art of riding as such in the several rides into which the seventy horses, continuing as a squadron throughout winter, are divided?

S. The riding instructions prescribe that recruits who lag behind, ride according to the first part of the riding instructions. That gives our limit, and refers to the ride which we called No. 8. The remaining rides, Nos. 3, 4, 9, 10, and 11, are to be trained in accordance with the principles of the second part of the riding instructions, for they belong in the second riding class.

H. These five rides should then be able in the end to go the side paces on the double trail, and shortened paces.

S. That would certainly be contrary to the red thread which runs throughout the riding instructions, and against their expressed wording.

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\* All this has been much changed of late years. I have myself seen German cavalry constantly out in winter with the thermometer 43° below zero. This was in January and February, 1893.—EDITOR.

It is stated there, that progress should conform to the bodily development of the horse. A badly-ridden side pace on the double trail will ever be injurious to it. The instructions state further and expressly, that there are horses which will never be able to go the higher paces, as I mentioned several times. They should therefore be omitted with such horses. The insight of the riding instructor and squadron commander is to decide in each case, whether or when a horse may be trained in them.

Let us begin with the rides of older horses to which the best riders belong, that is, according to our division, with the remount riders on older horses which we called rides Nos. 3 and 4. In No. 3, i.e., among the horses which were old remounts during the past year, horses will be found which may be bent sideward so far that the two hoof prints separate (double trail). It will be possible so to shorten their gaits with hind hand well under, as to approach the shortened school pace.

Horses will also be found among them with such conformation that the higher side paces should never, others with which they may not yet, be begun.

H. Hence the greater number of horses on which the higher paces may be ridden and illustrated, will be found in No. 4, i.e., of remount riders on horses which on the average, are in their fourth year of service.

S. Yes, if the remount riders in ride No. 4 were as good riders as those in No. 3. We should not forget that in No. 4 the less experienced trainers are riding, and for that reason be more cautious in the rate of progress and demands.

H. You would in no case make fixed demands on these two rides.

S. Yes, I would! I make the fixed demand that each riding unit (man and horse) be so far (and no farther) advanced in the art of riding as is beneficial to the horse and intelligible to the rider. This degree of progress in the side paces on the double trail consists in the distance between footprints (from zero to the normal of one pace), and in the shortened trot in the degree to which the hind hand is brought under, which carries the fore hand, more or less.

Under no consideration would I ever have the higher school paces (side paces on the double trail and completely shortened paces) practised in rides, but merely by those riders and horses which are sufficiently advanced. That holds good for all the rides of the squadron.

For the degree of shortened gait which a horse can go varies. None could show its greatest proficiency in rides with distances, because it must conform to the gait of its leader. The very best horses cannot go side paces on the double trail in rides, and observe distance at the same time. For depending on circumstances the rider might have to urge and increase the gait just when the horse's gait would call for "half position," or to rein in when the horse's gait would call for urging. I believe I developed that idea once before. But I am obliged to repeat, if I am to precisely define the demands to be made.

H. I cannot refrain from reverting to that portion of the second

part of the riding instructions which treats of the inspection, and gives illustrations of the manner of conducting an inspection. Side paces in rides, it is expressly stated there, are to be ridden by command, and likewise shortened paces in rides.

S. I know very well that those illustrations have done much harm, where in conformity thereto, machine-like, the instructors go through the programme in a perfunctory manner throughout the year, or at any rate during the last few months or weeks.

That is neither the intention nor the sense of the riding instructions.

The illustrations are expressly stated to be given as illustrations, not as precepts or stencil patterns.

They are also given with reference to one point alone, not to many points. It is nowhere stated that practice should be conducted in that manner. On the contrary, all precepts of the riding instructions which have reference to the exercises, i.e., gymnastics by means of which man and horse are to be trained, assume that the rider is riding by himself. Again and again you find the caution "Much individual riding."

H. How do you expect a ride at inspection to ride side paces on the double trail with distances, and the shortened paces, if they are not practised in them?

S. I assure you they will do much better at the inspection, even in squads with distances when these paces have never been practised with distances and always during individual riding. Any inspector who is an expert rider, will prefer to see these paces on each horse separately. In case, however, he has not the time to do so, and merely wishes to get a general idea, side paces will go better when not previously drilled.

I will admit that each rider will make more mistakes and that each horse will go worse than in individual riding; still it will not be as bad as if they had been drilled "en bloc."

That is very natural. For in such exercises of higher paces with distances by command, the rider will sometimes commit an error of riding for the sake of keeping distance; he will give an aid which is wrong in itself and unintelligible to the horse. The horse remembers it and next day gives a voucher for it by wrong response to the proper aid, by obstinacy which may be slight at first. Daily repetition of riding of such exercises with distances in squads increases the evil. Every riding instructor will have the experience that when passing to the side paces in rides, after they have been taught singly, they go better during the first, than during subsequent days. If he fails to revert at once to individual riding, he becomes stubborn and desperate, simply because he does not realise that it is all his own fault.

If at the inspection he desires to show off as perfectly as possible the illustrations given in the riding instructions, he should practise these paces in individual riding exclusively.

Many commit the error of continuing the riding of these paces too long at a time. In the beginning it is beneficial to all horses to be

content with two or three steps, and of many no more than this should be required. But practising the same in the ride is apt to mislead the instructor to continue them too long to the detriment of the horses; in the end it will provoke obstinacy, for when he has once given the order, he wishes to observe each pupil, one after the other, and by the time he has done so, the pace will have been continued too long even for the very best horses.

H. I will now suppose that the inspector requires the presentation of the ride according to the illustrations in the riding instructions, and that according to your principle each rider rides the side pace in accord with the conformation and degree of training of the horse, i.e., one will ride the perfect side pace, the other the incomplete side pace, another a higher degree of position, another a one-sixteenth side pace, with one-half foot distance between trails instead of a short pace. The inspector will then find fault and refer you to the riding instructions where the exact distance between trails is laid down.

S. He will not, for he is a man who understands the art of riding. He will commend the rider who fails to ride the side pace on command, if his horse's conformation prevents it; he will commend the rider for taking less position and less distance between trails because the horse is not sufficiently advanced to comply with the full measure of the regulations. He will be pleased to see that there is "individualising." For he is well aware that the precepts of the riding instructions aim at the highest perfection of training, which is unattainable with defectively formed or developed horses. He will approve this restriction to a less degree, provided that pace be ridden thoroughly well. For he knows that faulty riding of the highest forms of these exercises will injure the horse.

All that the inspecting superior knows very well, because he is an experienced rider. We should be founding the principles of our training on very insecure grounds were we to presume, and act accordingly, that the inspector knows nothing about riding.

H. In the three other rides of the second riding class, which we designated as Nos. 9, 10, and 11, you would not, I suppose, permit side paces on the double trail?

S. Why not? Everything in its proper place! It depends on the capability of the horse and the degree of the man's training. In rides Nos. 9 and 10 those non-commissioned officers will probably ride who cannot, and likewise those who cannot yet, ride remounts, and therefore do not belong in rides Nos. 1 to 4; it is very possible that a non-commissioned officer may acquire the necessary skill in riding at a later date, particularly if his training has been interrupted by details as clerk, etc., and if it becomes certain that he has talent, his skill will be promoted by riding in rides Nos. 9 and 10. Similarly it will be with some four-year volunteers and three-year men, whose talents do not become apparent before the second year and whom, it is hoped, it will be found possible to class among the trainers.

H. Will suitable horses be found in these squads, since you have taken the best horses for the recruits?

S. Many good horses will still be available. One may be too high-spirited for the recruit, another too lazy. One has too high paces and bumps the rider too much, the action of another may not be sufficiently fresh. All these horses may be perfectly built and sufficiently advanced in their training to mount unfinished riders and give them an idea of the higher lessons and their purposes.

H. In ride No. 11, the horses of which will chiefly consist of candidates for the next condemnation, and which ride consists of more horses than men because the men do not ride daily, you will probably not expect the higher lessons at all.

S. Not at all! Among the candidates for condemnation might and should be the best ridden horses, and which are to be condemned solely because they begin to get old and are not expected to remain fit for service for any length of time. The same will no doubt be the case with those which have suffered in bone and sinew, and are to be condemned on that account. Among them should be the best ridden horses. It is not a good indication of the riding of the squadron, if it has horses condemned as "unfit for riding." The suspicion is bound to arise that the squadron has them condemned because it cannot manage them, and retains instead old and numb horses which are no longer equal to the strains of a campaign.

As regards the riders in this squad, there may be men of talent among them.

The causes interfering with their service have nothing to do with riding. Why should not among the tailors and shoemakers present with the arm be some men who have talent for riding, though the well-known proverb points out that it is not the rule?

Nor can I understand why, in ride No. 8, composed of such of last year's recruits as have lagged behind and are to undergo a second course of training, there should not be some riders who will make progress in the art of riding. One may have lagged behind owing to sickness during his first year of service and yet he may be well fitted for riding.

H. The riding instructions lay down the limits within which the first riding class is to be kept. If any man is to be advanced beyond, he should be removed from the first riding class.

S. That obtains for the winter in which the art of riding as such is chiefly cultivated. During the summer such men of the first class may well be advanced farther in individual riding just as the riding instructions state, that the recruits designated as future remount riders should, during the summer, be taught the aids of the second part on well-trained horses.

On the whole you would make the experience that, if the training of the horses has been conducted in this manner for four years before they are expected to train the rider, if, for the rest, the riding service has been managed practically, if the men be given full freedom in individual riding only, if the renewed "kniebeln" and systematic retraining of all squads



be omitted, and if higher lessons be taken up at a later date—that then, I say, the art of riding would be much better promoted in the ride and that among the old horses of the squadron there would be a great many more capable of going the higher lessons thoroughly well, than under the system now in vogue. Here Baucher's excellent words, "*plus vous allez lent, plus vous irez vite*," would be confirmed.

It would preserve the horse's strength. A squadron which manages the instruction in riding on these lines during ten normal years of peace, should come to such a point, that the old contingent of horses, when condemned, would, with a few exceptions, contain all horses originally belonging to it, and that all would be splendidly trained horses. They would still be so serviceable that it will make the squadron commander's heart bleed to have them condemned, and that other troops will be glad to retain them for one or two years more.

H. I have often heard it said that it is good for any horse to be thoroughly bent anew and worked over again in the autumn and winter of each year, because it loses during the summer exercises. Schmidt expressly demands it from all riding classes.

S. I acknowledge that I find it difficult to answer you, because I would like to say yes and no at the same time.

If the horse has deteriorated through the great summer drills and manœuvres, i.e., lost in balance and position, it should be retrained correspondingly. The horse should not deteriorate, however. If every rider exercises his horse individually and daily during the summer under the instructor's eyes, excepting days of regimental, brigade, and divisional drill, and days of manœuvre, whatever may have been lost, will be quickly regained; a stage is then gradually reached when the position is not, and is not to be permitted to be, impaired by drill.

In the autumn and winter every horse will certainly be bent over again; the only question is by what means. If the gait is properly increased and diminished so that the hind hand is brought under, a good deal of bending will be accomplished. Still more if the horse is given the second position. The correct medium trot does much bending, most of all the correct, sustained drill gallop.

I must admit that Schmidt makes the demand you mention; he adds expressly, however, that it is not to be understood as a repetition of the training, but that man and horse should advance in their training from year to year and that the manner of training the older horse subsequently to the manœuvres should correspond precisely to the degree of training of the horse at the time of its return from the manœuvres.

If he meant thereby that every horse should be tormented anew with shoulder in and passage, whether it be necessary or not—I say no! It cannot have been his meaning.

H. You said just now, that the horses of the last squad, candidates for condemnation, could go the higher lessons well, because they ought to be the best horses. Don't you think that these animals will forget

the higher lessons altogether and become stiff, when they have been recruit horses for four or six years?

S. A horse will never unlearn what it once learned well, while in the state of bodily development, and what it had perfected by the time it possessed its full strength. Exercise will keep it in practice and the higher lessons are merely salutary gymnastics. The horse will no more forget these things than will the author forget how to write orthographically correct though he may be unable to recite the rules from memory. I made that comparison once before.

Nor will the horse lose the capacity for the gymnastics of the higher lessons, for the motions, turnings, and jumps occurring in ordinary service will keep the muscles in training. It is possible that the remembrance of the aids used for setting these lessons in operation may sometimes become impaired. Rational treatment will soon recall them to the horse.

One thing I would ask you to keep strictly in view; no training, no "kniebeln" are to be permitted in those rides of the present second riding class, which are not specifically charged with training. They are the rides designated by you as Nos. 9, 10, and 11. If a rider improves so that he can and may be permitted to ride higher paces on a well-trained horse, it should be done for the benefit of his training—not that of the horse. The progressive training of the horse, training and re-training, should be done in those rides only which contain the most perfect riders, i.e., in these which you have designated as Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4.

It should ever be kept in view, that the horses are not to be taught the higher lessons, that these lessons are merely gymnastics, means to the end of making the horse obedient and efficient for war. That end attained, training ceases. The horse will need these lessons no longer. If some horse in rides Nos. 9, 10, and 11, is to go through these lessons, it is for the sake of the man's training. That accomplished, it should likewise cease.

H. I believe I am now sufficiently informed how you would like to have the riding service handled during the winter, and I simply wish to ask you now, whether you approve of our present manner of passing from the period of riding to that of spring drill.

From our previous exchange of views, I conclude that you approve, with a few exceptions, of taking May 1st as the day on which the recruits are placed in ranks, and drill by troop and squadron is commenced.

S. Not at all! You mentioned May 1st, and I accepted it as a date equally good as April 1st, May 15th, or some other date, without sanctioning the particular date.

H. And what date would you designate?

S. None. I mean this: In the spring when weather permits to take the recruits into the open riding ground and to eschew the school, they are to practise individually or in the square under their instructors, while the squadron commander now drills the old men on old horses

by troop or squadron, more frequently, and finally every day. The squadron commander selects each day those men who, when the squadron is formed, may participate in the half-hour drill. I spoke of that the last time. The number gradually increases so that finally four troops of eleven files (with some blank files) may be formed. From now on he lays more stress on drill by troop and squadron, but never so much as to use up the horse's strength or have no time left for dividing up the squadron daily—not only all the recruits, but also the old men on old horses—among their instructors for individual riding under supervision, or, sometimes, within the square.

When the squadron commander will be able to drill for the first time with four troops, will chiefly depend on the time when winter ceases. More and more recruits will gradually take part in the drill of the squadron, which will finally drill daily with 109 horses (110 counting in one 1-year volunteer), provided no horse is absent on account of sickness or detail. When, however, the first recruit may take part in the drill, when the squadron can be formed in four troops, when the last recruit will ride in ranks, can neither be predicted nor can a definite date be fixed, since, in the latter case, the training would be conducted with undue haste. Variations of as much as four weeks should be allowed for.

In all squads, however, individual riding, "tummeln," riding within the square, should go hand in hand with drill at all times, even throughout the summer.

H. When all recruits are in ranks and no horse is absent sick or on detail, you can turn out at the most with 110 horses, after deducting twenty-six remounts of both contingents. In the most favourable case you would be unable to comply with Schmidt's demand to turn out with four troops of twelve files each, among them one blank file at the most, for you have to mount fifteen non-commissioned officers and four trumpeters.

S. I told you once before that I consider this demand of Schmidt's excessive, because it will compel us to take the old remounts along every time and at a period when most of them are not completely developed and cannot have finished their training, and would therefore surely be spoiled by taking part in drill during the second year of their presence with the squadron. The old remounts may be turned out for parade, but I would excuse them from fatiguing drill throughout the year if practicable. We would always have some horses on the sick list or on detail, and turn out with eleven complete files at best. To that number let us adhere and fill further details by making additional blank files. During the war we were fortunate when we could turn out with nine or ten files on account of much detached service. A few blank files more or less in peace time make no appreciable difference.

H. I understand what you say. I also think that it would be a good preparation for the fatiguing period of squadron drill.

S. The period of squadron drill should not at all be more fatiguing than the previous period of riding in the open. Permit me again to make

an approximate calculation. Assuming that during one month of the winter, frost prevents us from using the drill ground, there remain five months from October 1st to April 1st, or twenty-one weeks, during which the old riders drill half-an-hour twice per week by troop or squadron. Assuming the winter (as in the present year) does not permit the use of the drill ground before April 1st, the squadron from then on rides daily half-an-hour in this manner, i.e., twenty-five times, and toward the last, with a number of recruits in the ranks. That makes sixty-seven half, thirty-three whole, hours of exercise, or sixteen drill days at the least, or an entire drill period preceding the time when troop and squadron drill used to commence. It thus becomes plain that drill in May would not entail unusual fatigue.

H. It would be a great gain for the shedding period, during which we like to spare the horses, or, any way, dislike to get them warm and then let them cool off in the open air.

S. Certainly. But they must be taken into the open every day in spite of, and because of, that period.

Consider further the advantage offered by this method of training now when it has been decreed that regimental drill is to begin each year in June. The training of the squadron need, nevertheless, not be hurried if the matter is managed in the manner pointed out.

H. I would like to express a doubt. Don't you think that the last recruits with their horses, who perhaps do not participate in the squadron drill until the first ten days of May, will spoil the order in the squadron because they are not sufficiently practised?

S. Much less so, than if they ride poorly and take part in drill before acquiring sufficient skill in riding.

H. Don't you think that the horses of the last recruits if placed in the ranks in the midst of the drill period, will not yet have sufficient wind for drill?

S. The recruit should ride as much drill gallop in individual riding as he would in drill, and during individual riding in April the squadron should be in as good trim as during drill in May. The recruit's horse is therefore in training whether it participates in drill or not.

H. Will the horses bear this uninterrupted training winter and summer?

S. Better than the exertions now and then required of them under our present system. I desire that they be given healthy and salutary exercise and work throughout the year, and that they be never overworked or driven to death. At present they are being driven to death twice each year, once in the period of spring drill, once in the great summer and autumn exercises, to which they are all the more unequal as they enter upon the period in heavy condition with hay bellies and fat lungs. The efforts I mean to require of them during the period of spring drills are not to exceed the work to which they are accustomed the whole year round, and less than the efforts heretofore demanded of them during

this period. The exertions during the great drills and manœuvres will remain the same as heretofore, but the horses will stand them better because used to constant work.

In your letters on cavalry you asked still more. I cannot deny that the other arms must demand such exertions from the cavalry if the latter is to serve its purpose. But it can be equal to those demands only if prepared during summer and winter in the manner pointed out by me.

If treated as I would like to have them treated, the horses will never be fattened and thick-bellied, but will possess strong muscles, remain fresh in their legs, and go in confident harmony with the rider, nor will they ever run down so and look as miserable as may nowadays be sometimes observed after the great cavalry drills.

More than once, as I have told you, I saw riders who had to dismount and drag their dead-tired animals painfully along by the reins to reach their quarters after the drill.

I assure you, if done according to my ideas, it will go. It will go better than heretofore. The experiment has been made by one squadron for a year.

H. Some years ago the war office added a half-a-pound to the ration of oats. That is now being saved as a rule in order to give the horses an additional daily allowance of a pound or more during the time of great fatigue. Do you consider the present ration sufficient to keep the horses in work and training throughout the year in your manner?

S. According to all I have told you, it will be more so. I will not deny that I would prefer a more ample ration. Better quality, however, would be preferable to greater quantity. According to present practice the "intendance" lets the supply of oats to the lowest bidder. The contractor, of course, furnishes the least nourishing oats, which give little strength. During the war our horses stood more in France, than in Germany during peace, because the French oats were excellent.

H. I cannot refrain from pointing out to you that, according to our principles of training, not all horses are kept so much in wind as seems desirable to you, but only the seventy older horses under the older riders. The sixty-six remounts and recruit horses which are relegated to the school during winter will be all the less in shape for fast paces, as you require much individual riding in the school, while the greater portions of the squads are comparatively resting.

S. The new riding schools are all very spacious, and since they are used by remounts and recruits only, these horses can get sufficient exercise in them. I cannot deny, however, that where such large schools do not exist, it is an evil I should like to remedy if it were possible. For that reason I would have the squads mentioned ride in the school so long only as the necessities of the weather make it unavoidable. As soon in the spring as possible we must go into the open and there accustom the horses gradually to more and more sustained fast paces and put them in good wind.

H. Do you not fear that your principles of training conflict with existing regulations?

S. Where and when? Did I not prove to you point for point that I am complying with the regulations, that I want the work conducted strictly in accordance with the riding instructions? All I want is to banish a certain perfunctoriness.

H. And existing old traditions.

S. On the contrary! I am recalling the good old traditions of the flourishing time of cavalry under the great king. Any troop commander may conduct the training of recruits on my principles without having to fear disapproval from his superiors.

H. Your principles culminate in this, that you do not want final riding inspections. The squadron chief cannot abolish them. He is the one to be inspected. The superior will come and hold snaffle inspection, final riding inspection, etc. What is the squadron chief to do?

S. He obeys, of course. He must submit to inspection if the superior wills it, and the latter may inspect when, what, and how he pleases. In his mind, however, the squadron commander should not consider it a final riding inspection, should not coach for it, should not drill exhibitions for it.

H. Then he will fall short of the other squadrons, and to compete with them he must manage the service as they do.

S. Not at all! He does not fall short, he will be ahead of them. Though the superior may, for instance, have the men ride in squads only with distances in the square or school (which is improbable, since the individual riding is also habitually inspected), I have previously shown to you that riding within the square with distances will go better if the chief weight is placed on individual riding, than if you simply keep on coaching in that formation alone. Anyway, all the squads have sufficient practice in riding in the square with distances, if, as I have pointed out, they make the proof of the example at the right time, toward the end every day. The only thing I don't want practised by squads with distances and by command are the higher lessons (side paces on the double trail and paces with correctly shortened gaits). I have also explicitly stated that, if asked for, they will go better by squads by command when they have not been taught that way, than if they had been drilled. In this I am not developing a theory. No, I assure you, I speak from many years' experience, for the experiment has been made for several consecutive years.

H. From what you have stated at various times I can, in the main, tell pretty well how you wish the regimental commander to make his inspection. I merely meant to ask you to remove some doubts occurring to me. You wish, in the first place, that the regimental commander do not fix any day for inspection, but be present at the instruction.

S. As often as possible and always unexpected. In this he should be as thorough as possible, should therefore not inspect everything on one day, but only part of the squadron, so as to invariably inspect with



fresh, unabated attention. He should do it according to a pre-arranged plan. For instance:—

He proposes, beginning with autumn, to look on five times a week at the work of the squadron. He will go once a week to each squadron. In this squadron he looks on once at the drill of the older men on the older horses, the individual riding, and the riding in the square, another time at the training of both remount squads, a third time at mounted recruit drill. Allowing for interruptions, he may be present once each month at the training of each ride of the regiment and see for himself whether the service is conducted rationally, and apply timely remedies to faults discovered in the course of training.

The daily drill schedules enable him to always arrive unannounced and unexpected. When he knows his regiment once, he will soon be able to lighten his task by appearing less frequently in the squadron which works correctly according to his notions, and perhaps more frequently where his advice seems more necessary.

H. This is practicable with the regiments which are united in one garrison. Nearly half of the German cavalry regiments are more or less scattered over several garrisons. The war department grants the regimental commander travel allowances for a limited number of travels only, for inspecting out-lying squadrons.

S. What of travel, of expense, of allowances! The commander rides over to the other squadrons, inspects the service and rides home again. He ought to be glad to mount his horse frequently and make long-distance rides. It will keep him fresh and habituated to being on horseback.

H. In any kind of winter weather also?

S. Has he not to be on his horse in all kinds of winter weather in war? The man who can't do it in peace, cannot command a regiment in war. The daily habit of remaining long on horseback preserves the cavalryman as such, averts pain in the spinal column which a single great exertion may bring on.

H. I believe your demands on the commander are too severe, as he will have attained a certain age before reaching that grade. Not every regimental commander can remain so fresh as to ride bare back to hounds as those two generals last autumn in Hanover. If every regimental commander incapable of this feat were declared unfit for service, our regimental commanders would eventually be too young to bring to the position the requisite experience in the details of training, and we should lose many a commander who on account of his experience in matters of riding is of inestimable value. You said yourself that one never learned all there is in riding and that a good rider and instructor need years of experience.

S. In a long peace it would likewise be impracticable and too much of a draft on the pension appropriation to have none but young regimental commanders. The management of service and inspection should there-

fore be so arranged, that all officers are kept in practice of remaining long in the saddle.

At present our peace service is not suited to produce enterprising commanders. At a certain age (forty to fifty-one) the officers confine themselves to the most indispensable requirements of the riding service. The indispensable is not sufficient to keep them in practice. Now many officers stand dismounted in the school for six months, the inspectors may inspect in the school on foot, because the school is placed too much in the fore ground. When the habit of riding is relaxed, the delight in riding relaxes, also the dash and the delight in fighting, and when at the out-break of war such a leader has to ride it is an exertion for him, he has pain in his back, and takes no delight in the war.

If the service were managed as I wish, all officers would have to ride daily, rain or shine; the superiors would also have to inspect in all kinds of weather. As long as they remain in the service, they would remain in practice and would not become prematurely old in body as well as in thought and action.

The study with its desk is not sufficient for the soldier, least of all for the cavalry leader. He belongs on horseback. But in our days even the lieutenant becomes disused to riding by his duties as dismounted instructor, by driving condemned horses, and by the vicinity of railroads to the garrisons.

The excursions of former days for visits in the neighbourhood and the return at night had much that was instructive and practical for cavalry officers. No particular interest in that direction exists to-day.

H. There is interest, but no opportunity. That there is interest you may see from the long-distance rides.

S. This substitute is unfortunately indulged in by the young men alone. Riding with the drag should be made obligatory. It would be in the interest of the older and highest officers, as it would keep them vigorous.

In the presence of the enemy you cannot rely solely on scouts, patrols, adjutants sent to the front; you must ride forward yourself and inspect the terrain if you wish to profit by it. The officer who learns how to orient himself in the hunting field will be a reliable leader to his troops before the enemy.

That should not be underestimated. At any rate, it will raise the confidence in one's own power and enterprise.

And the regimental commander who has hunted all the winter will not find the detached squadrons too distant to visit them on horseback though there be a railroad.

H. Many garrisons of single squadrons lie so far apart that it is absolutely impossible to visit them as often as indicated by you.

S. In that case it only remains to take the cars to those garrisons to inspect them. Still, if the commander is imbued with zeal and interest for his position, he will not refrain from visiting these garrisons at his own expense oftener than the government grants allowances

H. Certainly, if he has means of his own. Our officers are accustomed to spend their private means on the service. Not every regimental commander has private means, but most of them have families. You would not make the qualification of a regimental commander for his position dependent on his private means?

S. Well, if it is impracticable for the regimental commander to visit some of his squadrons frequently to witness the individual training, he must apply the method of frequent inspection, suggested by me, to those squadrons alone which are at regimental headquarters, or in close vicinity. The more distant squadrons he would only visit as often as he is granted allowances for. In that case he should remain for some time with each squadron and inspect the individual riding in this manner, that no exhibition be made for his sake, and that he simply witness the instruction, and never witness more on any one day than he is able to observe closely with full and fresh attention.

H. How do you wish the brigade commander to inspect?

S. The regulations make the regimental commander responsible for the individual training of the regiment as you reminded me yourself some time ago. Hence the brigade commander would never during the winter course of training have anything to do with the details of riding. According to regulations he inspects the formed squadrons. On that occasion he may take some riding squad and have it perform anything he chooses down to individual riding of the men of different contingents.

I do not, however, wish the brigade commander debarred from witnessing the individual training of the squadron. Any body of troops ought to be glad of, and see an honour in, the interest manifested by general officers in the most minute details of their service. If in doing so the brigade commander desires to get a correct insight in the individual training, and exercise beneficial influence, he should be present with the regimental commander when the latter witnesses the individual training of one of his squadrons. He will then perceive whether the regimental commander's action is in the right direction, and have sufficient opportunity to equalise differences of opinion. If he sees that the regimental commander's method is correct, he need make no further inspection of detail in that regiment.

H. Take now the division commander.

S. The divisional commander who is interested in the details of training, may do like the brigade commander. He will probably have to limit himself to witnessing the individual riding of one squadron of each regiment of his division per year. His other duties will hardly leave him time for more. Nor is more required. He will get along with less if he except those regiments whose commanders, by their methods, have previously gained his unqualified approval. If, however, the divisional commander comes from another branch of the service, as is the case in many mixed divisions, his inspections of details of riding have no value for the troops but that of the honour done them by his presence.

H. I was from another branch of the service, still as often as I could I was present at the detailed riding inspections of the cavalry regiments of the division commanded by me. I did it for the sake of seeing and learning.

S. Then, it is true, the troops will have another, indirect benefit from it.

#### FOURTEENTH CONVERSATION. (APRIL 25TH, 1886.)

##### SUMMER EXERCISES.

H. Having in the course of our discussions on the details of riding reached the beginning of the drill season, I propose to find out by what principles you want the drill of the several units governed.

S. By beginning your questions in this way you take all ground from underneath my principles. For I dislike the word "drill season." As I said before, drill should go on the whole year round.

H. Admitted! You spoke of that the last time. But the fact remains that in our service we begin each autumn the training of more than one-quarter of the men and one-tenth of the horses, and, moreover, many men and horses require retraining.

S. Retraining must take place at all times of the year, whenever it is found necessary, not in winter alone. Practical riding in the field and accurate drill are the chief aims to be kept in view in the training of remounts and recruits. When they have sufficiently progressed to be placed in ranks and drill with the squadron, I fail to see why, after the autumn manœuvres, they should be allowed to get out of practice or why drill should be suspended for eight or nine months. The fact that one-quarter of the men and one-tenth of the horses are to be newly trained, is no reason why the training of the others should be entirely suspended during the greater part of the year; why during three-quarters of the year the riding square should be made not only means to an end, but an end; why the squadron should be deprived of its routine in drill, and why the young men should be systematically made to forget what they have just learned. This often-advocated principle of mine should be followed out.

H. Could not this "forgetting" be obviated by recitations in regulations, limited in scope according to the several grades?

S. No! Not at all! The memorising of the regulations does not do it. After individual riders are able to ride independently and firmly, accurate drill depends on a number of aids and exercises learned by practice alone, and easily forgotten in the absence of practice, as General von Schmidt very correctly says in his "Instruction for Cavalry."

Now, as I argued the last time, we must be ready to take drill at any time. For that reason we must insist that drill never ceases.

If the squadron cannot be formed in four troops, you must drill in two.

in two troops, or in four single-rank troops, which we discussed the last time; or with open files with intervals between the riders, or in skeleton—not every day, but as often as necessary to keep the men of all grades and ranks well posted in drill.

H. The last time you dissipated the doubts set forth by me whether the horses would be able to stand constant physical training. To-day it occurs to me that constant drill might ruin the horses; for it is not to be denied that every drill season runs the horses down.

S. Yes! That is due to our present method, and is even quite generally considered a matter of course.

The horses are ridden to exhaustion in order to make them quiet. That certainly reduces them, but without rendering them obedient. As soon as they have been rested and fed, they are no more obedient than before.

As soon as you fix a certain season for drill, everything is crowded into it and the horses are overworked. In that short period the men must not only learn everything they would otherwise learn in the course of a whole year, but also everything they have forgotten during the long suspension of drill.

H. It is plain to me that, if drill is kept up the whole year round, there is no necessity for learning much in a brief space of time.

S. Let us call the child by the right name, "cramming much." Cramming will invariably produce "*ennui*," and, for heaven's sake, no "*ennui*" on service!

If the men have simply learned riding, individual riding, controlling their horses, they will easily learn the drill evolutions, the drill will, so to speak, go off by itself. It is in this way alone that the men can keep their minds on their business, and cramming becomes as unnecessary as overworking.

H. It would be worth while to make the experiment of having one or more squadrons drill throughout the year now and then in order that they may be spared more during the so-called drill season, fixed by the authorities.

S. It is not necessary to make the experiment. With the squadrons under my command, and afterward with the regiment, I have drilled in all seasons, and they stood it splendidly. They remained in hand, I did not have to overwork them, they did not fall off in any season, did not need to be spared or specially fed at any time, drilled steadily and confidently, more particularly in broken ground. Assembly and rallying I have never seen better performed by any troops. I beg that you will not misunderstand me and believe that I am bragging. I dislike to speak of my own achievements. I mention the matter merely because it is the experiment you propose.

H. Do you think it would be easy to have such an innovation generally adopted?

S. It is no innovation at all. It is not a method of any invention. It is, as I have stated before, the method pursued in the training of the

cavalry of Frederick the Great, and it may be asserted that it is a tried method, which has never been surpassed. It has proven its worth by its results. I have simply rescued it from the rubbish heap of oblivion.

H. Yet it will appear an innovation to all who have, and have been, trained under our method and who, faithfully believing themselves working within a most excellent scheme, have not troubled themselves about improvements. But besides, certain regimental drill seasons have to be fixed for all regiments not quartered in one garrison, not to mention larger exercises. The regiment will, of course, want a squadron drill season preceding the regimental drill.

S. Even if the regimental commander should fix certain squadron drill seasons, contrary to my ideas just explained, the squadron commander would come out better by keeping up the drill throughout the year, because his squadron would not run down during the drill season. I can guarantee that from my own experience.

H. It will relieve all those timid minds diseased with inspection fever. I have a warm heart for such sufferers, since the disease springs from too much zeal and in blind obedience.

S. However pardonable and human the origin of the disease may be, it is not the less injurious to the proper cavalry spirit, producing as it does that soul-killing cramming for inspection in squadron drill as well as in school riding.

H. I cannot contradict you on this point, for you are probably aware from my letters on infantry how I am opposed to all cramming for inspection in all military exercises.

S. Likewise, every sufferer from inspection fever may, as regards riding inspections, console himself with the assurance that even in the mere ride inspection within the riding square he will come out better by following my principles than by cramming.

H. That point we settled to our satisfaction the last time.

S. True; but I constantly revert to it, not alone because I consider individual training through the medium of individual riding the main foundation, but also because in the time of summer drill and exercises I deem it of first importance, that this foundation of all cavalry training, this individual riding, be practised constantly, daily.

H. In accordance with the dictum of Frederick the Great cited by you the last time: "*Soignez les détails, ils sont le premier pas pour la victoire.*"

S. Not that alone, for the dictum holds good for all arms. In the cavalry the training in riding is more particularly the prerequisite of all proficiency in the school as on the drill ground, in the peace manoeuvres as in battle with the enemy.

If cavalry would claim reliability, it is a prerequisite that every rider be firm in the saddle and master of his horse, above all the leaders, the officers.

H. I have an idea that at some other place the king spoke more in detail on this individual training of the horseman.



S. He says (Œuvres de Frédéric le Grand): "L'exercice de l'infanterie roule sur ses armes et sur ses jambes. L'exercice de la cavalerie à dresser l'homme pour monter en écuyer et le cheval en l'obéissance. Cette école demande des peines infinies; pour que chaque homme monte comme un écuyer il faut qu'un escadron soit dressé *homme par homme, cheval par cheval*, et cela, pour ainsi dire, toute l'armée. Cela est d'autant plus nécessaire, que si l'on veut que cette machine joue ensemble, il faut que chaque ressort soit travaillé avec le même soin." (Comp. Kaehler.)

H. I believe we agreed on the soundness of that principle the last time, and may limit ourselves to-day to the question of how you would like to have the drill managed.

S. The last time we discussed in detail the "how" of individual training only. If I am to develop my idea of the drill of the troop, I must again start from the trained horseman, and explain how I mean to weld the individuals into an unit.

H. Do not the regulations explain that sufficiently?

S. No! The regulations are the rule how the movements are to be made, not how they are to be taught. The brief hints in paragraphs 50 and 59 of how to pass from the easy to the difficult, are not sufficient and, for the most part, do not receive sufficient attention.

H. It is true, if we follow the sequence in which the regulations take up squadron drill, and begin the training with paragraph 63, we would begin with the most difficult.

S. Let me therefore begin with the atom, the mounted horseman.

The training of the horse is the first consideration. All work devoted to the training of the man is thrown away, if the horse is deficient.

It is, therefore, as repeatedly emphasised by me, not sufficient to train the horse with a view to what it must accomplish at the inspections on the riding and drill grounds, but the animal must also be practically trained for war service, its intelligence must be roused and developed.

In the ranks thigh and rein should keep the horse in position and balance, elsewhere it should be ridden with slight support, in order that it may look out for itself, step freely, and plant its feet as its safety demands.

It follows that a short rein will have a detrimental effect on good, steady drill as on all practical riding. It will lead the horseman into hanging on by the reins, into holding back in the long gallop, deprive the horse's mouth of feeling, and result in a complete cessation of the rider's control over the horse.

Too short a rein will prevent the horse from stepping out, from stretching, it will lose the regulation step and be unable to go the long gallop otherwise than by forcibly pulling and dragging the rider along.

H. Do you find that the mistake of riding with too short a rein is intentionally committed in many regiments?

S. It is quite frequent and the result of the grafting of other systems

of riding on military riding, from "kniebeln" in the school as ultimate object, up to racing, which seeks the fifth leg in the horse's mouth. It is necessary to check this irregularity; for this being dragged along by the reins has become quite at home in military riding and impairs the capacity of the horse.

Just imagine to yourself how the loss of control over the horses will influence and injure their obedience, how precision of drill will suffer from it.

If the horse gets out of hand at the gallop, where is the guarantee for the compact charge and the quick rally? The troop is no longer in the leader's hand.

H. Too short a rein and the hanging-on by the reins lies in the nature of the rider who does not feel at home on horseback and becomes nervous when he rushes through the air at high speed. It is human that he should want to prevent a motion more rapid than contemplated by himself, and he tries to accomplish this by a sharp pull of the rein.

S. This remark of yours leads me back to my previous assertion, that the fault lies in the precipitation of the training of the recruits in the first elements of riding, because frequently the chief consideration, the making of the seat, is slurred over.

Whoever cannot ride a long hunting gallop without holding on by the reins, is not fit for cavalry service. He endangers order in the ranks, nor is he fit for horse training, because he has not sufficient seat to guide a horse lightly. Yet many such men are employed for training. Where it is done, the horses are, of course, badly broken. As soon as anything is demanded of them outside the exercise ground and outside of the daily routine, they get more or less out of hand and position, and become refractory.

That produces the dislike so frequently met with in the squadrons, toward individual riding and riding in dispersed order.

H. It is not surprising if such squadrons are afraid lest lively paces make the horses refractory and lest riding in dispersed order endanger steadiness and order in close drill and the compact charge.

S. This fear is wholly without justification. With properly-trained horses and riders the very opposite is the case.

The fact that the horses are not up to the bit, which you may observe in so many squadrons and which finds expression in holding back and in a forcible bracing against the bit, results from this, that neither man nor horse has been taught how to ride forward. Lulling the horses to sleep when riding in the square, the indolent and sleepy gait, had been mistaken for steadiness, the paces shown had been mistaken for the result of the men's riding. For the most part the horses had done everything by themselves and executed the commands in order to escape the aids and remain behind hand and leg.

You believe you have before you a squad which is in obedience. That illusion will disappear as soon as you ask them to show their individual riding, either on the riding square or in dispersed order.

In the former you will become aware of dragging, creeping paces, the men cannot ride a straight course, you see at once how unwilling the horses are to leave the square in which they had settled down so comfortably with their riders.

In the dispersed order you will see the contrary. The horses bolt like mad and show a refractoriness to which the men are quite unequal.

H. I am not surprised that squadrons in which riding stands on this level, should have a prejudice against all exercises which might interfere with their so-called steadiness.

S. To be lulled to sleep is almost as pleasant and comfortable as sleeping. If it has come to this, that those lulled to sleep are admired and highly commended, it is natural that they shun and fear an awakening. But this awakening will be brought about by the charge, by the combat in dispersed order, and by the demand for a quick rally.

The end and aim of all cavalry training is the close charge and the quick rally from the dispersed order.

How can you expect with certainty close charges and quick rallies on the part of the horsemen, who even when riding by themselves, cannot keep their horses on a straight course with both reins at a lively pace?

H. Now I understand why you have reverted with so much prolixity to individual training, though we meant to discuss drill as a whole. You mean to pass systematically from individual training to the movements in dispersed order, from the latter through the medium of rallying to close formations.

S. You have guessed it. It should be done in the first place in small squads before teaching and practising it by platoon or squadron.

I must remind you, however, that the movements in dispersed order, and the rally from it, form no part of the drill and can only be brought about by individual riding. We then use individual riding not only as a means to an end, but also as an end in drilling.

For that reason it is neither sufficient nor well to give the men scanty instruction in it during the drill season. On the contrary, as I mentioned before, it should be the end and aim of cavalry training to make the man independent from the moment of his entry in the service. For on the independence of every individual, on his ability to control his horse and to obey in unison with the horse, depends the assembly, combat discipline, the close charge, the quick rally, the control by the leaders in critical moments in the face of the enemy, the use of arms, the success and efficiency of cavalry.

H. But you stated just now, that the vehement close charge was the end and aim of the training. On it rests the fate of cavalry.

S. Both cover each other and are identical, for without this independence of the individual rider the close vehement charge is not assured. I concede that I have not enlarged sufficiently on the full gallop and its development.

The ground permitting, the men should practise their horses in the full gallop every day. It is a part of the "tummeln." Full gallop

is a gait like every other. The riders should not think that they are undertaking something extraordinary by giving their horses their heads, otherwise they would never be free from excitement before the charge. This excitement has an injurious effect on compactness, and on the obedience of the horses. The man should, therefore, feel at home on horseback as much at full gallop as at a walk.

He should also have that self-confidence when mounted, which is indispensable to the cavalry soldier, and which flows from the consciousness of control over the horse. Without this consciousness and self-confidence there would be no enterprising cavalry. Delight in risk and danger is its element, without it success is impossible.

H. Have you formulated any special scheme of how to pass from individual riding to the movements in dispersed order, and from the latter to the close battle formations?

S. Formulated? No! I have borrowed and accepted it from the tried method in which Frederick the Great trained his cavalry. Thirty-five years ago I rescued it from the cavalry rubbish heap, where it had been thrown when riding school and drill ground were made ultimate objects, from the same heap of rubbish from which I rescued individual riding. In this manner I trained the two squadrons which I have commanded in the course of my service, and I found that the method also held good to-day.

H. Does not your method differ from the one prescribed in par. 59 of the drill regulations of July 5th, 1876?

S. No! I don't want to differ from the regulations. The regulations are our gospel. But we find that the exercises of par. 59 are, as a rule, treated in much too stepmotherly a manner. Too little time and labour are devoted to them. I make them my special object, especially those forms which the men use when riding by themselves and not in close formations. Just as the recruit is not instructed in the handling of the reins until he has a firm seat, so we should not pass on to drill in close formation until the movements in dispersed order have been sufficiently practised.

H. For practising the troop in the several paces the regulations recommend riding with open files with an interval of a horse's length, afterward in double rank with open files with a distance of two horse's lengths.

S. It is a very excellent exercise, which generally is not sufficiently practised. The regulations expressly lay down these formations for breaking the horses to gallop. They furnish an excellent preparation for a good, steady drill, and have the advantage that the man is constantly compelled to ride, to influence his horse himself, and cannot allow himself to be taken in tow by the mass.

In galloping in ranks it is of first importance to do it so that much ground is gained and the horses do not become excited. In contradistinction to the gallop employed for training purposes on the riding square, the gallop for practical purposes should be ridden long and flat and with

but slight collection. It should never be forgotten that the drill gallop should gain more ground than the trot, otherwise the latter would suffice.

The most practical manner of training horses to gallop before we make them go in one or two open ranks with more or less regard for direction, is, according to my experience, by swarm [The German term "Rudel" here employed by the author literally means "herd."—TRANSLATOR.] on circles, small at first and larger afterward.

In this manner we meet most effectively the faults of holding back, of being dragged along by the reins, which so injuriously affects the ability to turn, the obedience and wind of the horse, and render steadiness of drill impossible. In this manner we do not excite the ambition of the horses which, much to the detriment of good order, like to convert any rapid movement in company into a race. In the swarm, due regard can be had for every kind of temper. The horse can go as it likes. It receives no rude aids to keep up the pace and direction in ranks, and it is these rude aids that produce the horse's excitement and fear of the gallop. This is all done away with in the swarm. From the centre of the circle the instructor can better observe every rider than if he were riding in front, and notice and correct faults of riding more quickly. Afterward I had the swarms gallop on cut-up ground and over obstacles, and after the gait had been established under these various conditions, I passed on to movements with opened ranks.

In the swarm the men may also be practised in following in dispersed order the movements of their officers.

The chief consideration is, never to lose an opportunity for practising the rally from dispersed order.

H. I should think that this course of drill would require much more time than the method now in vogue.

S. It merely seems so at the beginning; it is the same, however, as with a thorough treatment of the first preparatory aids to remounts, and with the cultivation of a good seat of the recruit. The time so spent is fully compensated for later. I assure you that in this manner I reached the result, that the obedience of man and horse was implicit, that the squadrons rode mobile, confident, and adroit in the field, and charged compact.

H. When and how was the time devoted to drill by swarm and in dispersed order, compensated for?

S. The rider who takes delight and has skill in exercising his horse, manages it with greater skill in dispersed order and learns the latter more quickly. Riding in close formations becomes then child's play for him, for he knows and feels that he masters his horse, and that he can ride where and how he pleases. Rapid and confident riding in ranks requires, above all, obedience. Any further drill will then present no difficulties at all, if the men are firm in individual riding, in the dispersed order, in the swarm, and in rallying.

If we adhere to the following three points:

1. Uniform gaits and paces,
2. Ample distance between ranks,
3. Habituating the men to look straight to the front and not to look at the direction,

the training in the drill formations of the regulations will be mere play.

The touch during drill should always be loose to permit the horses to step out without hindrance. In the charge alone must the men be closed tight.

What I am demanding can easily be done by cavalry which has learned to control its horses.

Here, likewise, as in individual riding and in riding on the square, I can comfort those suffering from inspection fever. The method proposed by me and in vogue under Frederick the Great, leads to the end more certainly and quickly, results in greater precision of drill, and gives more satisfactory results at inspection than the lulling to sleep, the cramming.

H. It is all the more surprising to me that, as you say, the drill is not invariably begun with the forms of dispersed order followed by rallying.

S. The reason, in part, is that in the training not sufficient importance is attached to individual riding, without which this method becomes impracticable. It also lies in the sweet force of habit, this "wet-nurse of man," as Schiller makes Wallenstein call it, from the times when school and drill ground were ultimate objects. That practice in the movements of dispersed order has received too stepmotherly a treatment, has largely been brought about by the circumstance, that they appear far back in the regulations, in the fifth chapter. For that reason many believe themselves authorised to consider them as secondary matters which may be slurred over, if time happens to be short.

Very rarely is the dispersed order considered as means to the end of putting the troop in the leader's hand, as splendid preparation for confirming obedience, the drill and combat discipline; and yet dispersed order is all of this.

Horses which simply follow one in rear of the other, and, as a body, have been lulled to sleep, be it on the square, be it in the drill movements, do not yield unconditional obedience. With such horses men should not be allowed to ride by themselves in the schools. With such horses there will be hesitation to go through exercises in dispersed order on the drill ground. With such horses the troop is bound to get out of hand during exercises in dispersed order.

Where is the independence and self-activity of the individual man to come from, if he is constantly held by his coat tails?

This limited obedience, this consequence of following in rear of each other in squads, and this going to sleep in the drill forms, is no more suitable for the military mount and the campaign rider, than the lax discipline of a municipal guard is for the soldier.



H. Individual riding and rallying from dispersed order to close formations is, then, as much a criterion on good mounted troops as the conscious obedience, and initiative of obedience, is on any troop.

S. So it is! How should obedience, and initiative of obedience, be possible on the part of the rider, if he is unable to control his horse, if he is dependent on the horse, if he is not always able to obey however willing he may be?

I tell you, the best touchstone of battle discipline and of the trusty and adroit riding of a regiment, is the prompt and quick rally, not on the habitual drill ground, but in strange country.

H. For this reason Frederick the Great prescribed that after each charge a charge of skirmishers should be made, adding: "But the fellows must be instructed that I don't want it done that way in the presence of the enemy, that it is done this way in peace time merely to teach them how to rally quickly, because in war a charge will invariably throw the rascals in disorder." This we cited once before.

S. Good, quick rallying is difficult under war conditions, very difficult, and should therefore be unceasingly practised in peace.

H. It is a great demand on discipline, if, for instance, the victorious cavalry is to cease pursuit of the enemy the moment the trumpet calls.

S. And the history of all wars furnishes many instances where the incipient victory of the cavalry was converted into total defeat through defective rallying.

H. Still greater is the demand on discipline if the troop is to rally while retreating after defeat.

S. A cavalry troop which can do that is thereby safeguarded from panic. And no troop may so easily be seized by panic as cavalry whose horses are not in obedience, and whose riders are not proficient in rallying. No troops, when seized by panic, are so utterly useless as cavalry. On proficiency in prompt and quick rallying depends the confidence cavalry should have of never compromising its honour.

H. The bravest cavalry which has not learned how to rally may compromise the honour, for if it possible for a whole division to bolt to the rear in peace manœuvres, as you told me, when there was neither enemy nor danger, no amount of bravery will safeguard from such accidents.

S. Quick rallying also facilitates the passage of difficult ground and the subsequent rapid assumption of close formations. Water courses (Striegau Water, and the stream in the battle of Chotusitz), woods, steep slopes, are passed "en débandade." Beyond a quick rally is made. A leader who knows that his troop is able to do this, will lead more boldly than if he is timid and has to reflect whether he might not, while in disorder, come upon the enemy and be routed. Confidence in his troops makes the leader bold. Only in this way can he perform great things. Where they failed to materialise, the cause lay in lack of understanding of, and confidence in, the arm.

H. Seidlitz's greatest admirer, Varnhagen von Ense, says of him,

that during the last campaign of the Seven Years' War under Prince Henry, he did not fulfil the expectations of great deeds entertained of him.

S. In this case it was not a lack of understanding, but certainly a lack of confidence in the arm. The cavalry of 1762 was one totally ruined by six years of war. Seidlitz understood his business too well not to see that he could not risk with this cavalry what he had risked with that of 1757.

It was therefore the king's care after the war, to again train the cavalry in rallying, in order that the cavalry leaders might again be enabled to risk great things. For when he made his inspections, he selected close country for the charges. The squadrons were necessarily disordered in overcoming the difficulties of the ground and were required to rally with the utmost rapidity in order that the shock might be delivered in close formation.

H. You certainly have some practical rules for training in prompt and correct rallying.

S. A few, yes! But in the first place I want to say that the troop must not only be practised in passing quickly from dispersed order to close formations, that it must be able not only to disperse quickly at the command: "Extend!"—"Gallop!" but also to continue the movement in dispersed order for some time.

H. Even in riding through a deep forest.

S. Not only that, but on many occasions not specially enumerated in this connection by the regulations, and on which the regulations can be strictly carried out only on the drill ground, never in war.

For instance, some squads are required to leave the line for pursuit at full speed. That is very proper on the drill ground for testing the riding efficiency of the men, but is impracticable before the enemy.

It is, of course, perfectly proper to pursue in dispersed order, because this formation admits of a more efficient use of arms, because ground is covered more easily, and because it is not so hard on the horses as the close order. But in war, if the enemy were to be pursued at full speed with "March!" "March!" from a halt, the horses' wind would soon be gone. On such occasions you have to ride for miles at a drill gallop, under circumstances at a trot, retain control of your men in spite of the disorder, direct them, and, when necessary, close them together for the charge.

For a horse can gallop a long time, but at full speed it will go but a brief while. A cavalry which in pursuit overtakes its horses by premature full speed, runs the risk of being overthrown by the smallest reserve of the enemy.

H. For the charge on an artillery position the dispersed order is expressly prescribed by the regulations.

S. It is the best formation for the purpose, for the enemy's fire cannot have the same intensity of effect on troops in dispersed as in close order, the ground can be better utilised and overcome, the very great distances now traversed under fire are passed over with greater ease and

rapidity, because no regard is paid to the slower horses, and lastly, falling or wounded horses do not produce disorder.

Now let us examine such a charge when the riders have not been instructed in individual riding or how to make sustained movements in dispersed order. I assume that 2,000 metres only have to be traversed. If you at once command "Extend!" "Gallop!" the charge will never succeed. Not being accustomed to this formation the horses cling together in knots, and, forming large clumps, they offer the most desirable kind of a target for the shells.

The whole troop should therefore be able to make sustained movements with change of direction in dispersed order and at all gaits.

H. The most difficult rallying in the presence of the enemy is certainly rallying to the rear in retreat.

S. That is set forth in the regulations too; these difficulties become apparent even in peace. Unless we simply keep the sense and purport of the regulations in view, we are apt to deduce from them contradictions.

Par. 105, 2, says that in rallying to the rear the squadron should retire in dispersed order on a straight line. This, however, is to be understood as referring merely to the first elementary exercises in rallying on the drill ground.

This is contradicted, as regards combat, by the requirements of pars. 101 and 109, that those retreating are not to mask the fronts of the reserves.

When, in addition, the cavalry has manœuvred during the advance in order to gain the enemy's flank, as required by regulations, it will, when defeated, not be able to retire in the direction from which it came. Par. 322 says: "A defeated detachment rallies under the protection of the nearest intact *échelon*."

This *échelon* will probably be on the line of the retreating body, which must therefore clear away from the front to enable the reserve to advance to the countercharge. In this sense the regulations demand expressly that the bodies which move in dispersed order remain capable of direction.

Hence it should be the first effort in drill to direct bodies in dispersed order.

H. I understand. You begin by riding by swarm.

S. Yes! From it I pass, at the same gait, by signal or command, to riding with open files and ranks, then to closed ranks and the reverse, as soon as the gait of the drill gallop and trot is confirmed. Next I pass directly from the swarm to close formations and the reverse.

H. That will not ensure prompt rallying from the *mêlée*, for in the swarm the men still observe some kind of order.

S. True! With what I have explained, I gain a quick closing-in of the riders who make well-directed movements in swarm formation, for instance, in pursuit, after the passage of forests or other difficult

ground, etc. It is, at any rate, a good transition from the *mêlée* to the rally.

If we have individual riding every day, we have daily opportunity to practise this. When the whole troop is dispersed, the leader should not omit to practise rallying in various directions and in all possible formations, at first at a walk or trot, with increasing efficiency in riding at full speed, at a halt, or in motion, by command or signal.

The call or signal of the instructor must be obeyed at once. For instance, if part of the squads happens to be on the squares, part engaged in exercises on the riding ground, and the squadron commander has the assembly sounded, every instructor must at once dismiss his men and let them ride by the shortest way in the direction from which the call sounded. It will much improve the drill and combat discipline.

As the individual man, when called by name, has to turn his horse at once and approach his superior at the most rapid gait, so the men of the troops, squadrons, regiments, have to obey at once the trumpet call of assembly. They must ride in the direction from which the call came.

That holds good under all circumstances, particularly for the combat.

Senseless rushing up is not to be tolerated. The horses are to be collected in time from the fast pace, and ridden quietly into the ranks. The men will soon understand that the formation will be completed much more rapidly this way.

It should be strictly insisted upon that every man move into the ranks straight from the rear. Coming up sideways is not to be tolerated, it delays the formation, causes closing up, jostling, bad alignment and faulty formation.

H. Then you want the recruit likewise practised in rallying, at first at a walk?

S. Of course, as soon as they can guide their horses a little in some way, they are taught the elementary principles of rallying. When the men have absorbed them by daily practice, when they have learned to move in the swarm and with open files and ranks, when every one is practised in individual riding, the instruction in dispersed order, as prescribed by regulations, will present no difficulties, and still less the drill in close formations.

H. Unless the troop has been prepared in this way, there is danger lest it get out of the leader's hand when in dispersed order.

S. Certainly. That also is plain from the general principles laid down in Part II., Section 1, Chapter V., par. 100. Hence dispersed order and movements in it, must be practised in the manner indicated, and become second nature to the men.

It should be specially insisted upon that in all movements by swarm, forward or to the rear, the officers (troop leaders) be held responsible for the pace. They are to ride in advance of the men's heads. It is the

leader alone (including the squadron leader), that remains behind during retreat to observe the enemy.

Each troop follows its leader and observes him. The troop leaders observe the squadron leader.

Trumpet and bugle sounds are to be respected at once and beyond recall. The direction is taken toward the place whence the sound was made. In rallying in retreat the fronts of the reserves are to be unmasked.

This riding in swarm order must be practised daily at every drill. The men disperse or close in by signal or caution of the leader. Formation of line or squadron column should go smoothly. When each squadron is firm, this is practised with several squadrons, finally with the whole regiment.

H. I think we have now exhausted the movements in swarm order and the passing from it to the close formations, and might now discuss the drill proper in close formation.

S. Nothing further remains to discuss, and hardly anything to practise. For if what we have discussed has become second nature to the men, the execution of all elementary evolutions by squadron or regiment becomes child's play, as previously stated, especially if drill is never suspended so that the little tricks required for a "smooth" drill do not escape the squadron leader's mind.

Then we would not have to hunt our horses to death, cram and weaken them during any drill season.

Where this foundation has not been laid by individual riding, riding by swarm, and by rallying, the most exhausting overwork and cramming will yield deceptive results at best. May be that the squadron commander comes out well in the inspection for once. But he is never sure of it.

An old sergeant-major in my early lieutenant days said of a new chief, who was very confident before the inspection: "He does not know the danger yet." That is characteristic of the "crammed" troop. For a well-trained squadron has to fear no danger of any kind.

H. A great deal is generally demanded of cavalry. When I consider all that the rider must learn, specially since he has a long-range carbine and has to learn to fight on foot, I can sometimes hardly understand how it is possible with our present system of service. Don't you think that three years of service is rather a short time for it, if, moreover, drill is to be kept up the whole year round?

S. On the contrary. By drilling the whole year round I am saving time. It is only necessary not to spend the whole drill day in dead drill. Many other things can be done on the same day.

If the principles of drill are kept fresh in the troop, you do not have to pound them in again by fatiguing drill, and you have the whole summer (regimental and brigade drill and manœuvre days excepted) for other war-like exercises as swimming, fording, field service, outpost exercises, distance rides, with reconnaissance. I have already spoken of the riding over snow and ice, which should be practised in winter.

H. You likewise explained in the course of one of our first conversations your principles for swimming and fording.

S. If there is any opportunity at all, it should be practised so much, that it makes no difference to the horses whether they are walking on sand or in the water. Did not Seidlitz drill in the Ohle river?

H. I need not ask whether you place any value on field service.

S. The proper performance of field service is one of the chief aims for cavalry, for the service of reconnoitring and screening forms one of its main tasks. If we take the training in hand according to my principles, we shall have practised field service in winter quite frequently, and shall therefore not have to devote so much time and work to this branch during the favourable season in order to come up to requirements.

H. I suppose you don't think much of dismounted fighting.

S. I do! We should be able to use our splendid carbine. But it should not be made the first consideration. Speed is the element of cavalry. To speed it should chiefly devote itself. The sabre and lance—the vehement and well-closed charge—are, and remain, for cavalry the manner of combatting the enemy. The dismounted fight is an expedient, if infantry cannot come up just yet. It may be practised here and there in field exercises, after turning out a couple of times dismounted to teach the simplest forms. Then you can show on the ground, how to occupy defiles and other positions that cannot easily be turned. More you do not need. Target practice should be carried on most conscientiously in accordance with the regulations.

H. I can imagine that you are opposed to non-commissioned officers' races, since you have already expressed yourself most decidedly against having the principles of the race grafted on campaign riding.

S. The non-commissioned officers' races were forbidden by the authorities some years ago. Probably they were generally treated too much as sport, to the detriment of the riding and the material of man and horse. Properly handled they might benefit campaign riding. Their direction would have to be entrusted to a firm and experienced hand, otherwise they would be injurious to military riding.

These races would have to demonstrate how the care of the horse, its military training as I want it handled throughout the year, correct breaking and complete control over it, increase its efficiency for warlike purposes. The "starting" and racing would have to be avoided at the beginning.

An experienced leader guides the starters who approach by "pulk" (swarm) over the first obstacle, at first at a walk, then at the so-called dog trot. Then they take the other obstacles at a steady drill gallop without rushing or racing. The race itself should take place over the last third or quarter of the course without obstacles, at command, signal, or from some marked point. Thus the racing fever, senseless rush, timid taking of obstacles, and accidents, would be avoided. At the same time you may show how to ride on soft and other difficult ground.

The finish might be said to be useless from the military point



of view. Its object should be to increase the delight in this exercise by the award of a prize; such non-commissioned officers only should be admitted as are thoroughly proficient in riding, the admission in itself should be in the nature of a reward. Had these races always been handled in this manner, no accidents would have happened, nor would they have been forbidden.

H. We read much of distance rides nowadays. They have become fashionable. I thought you would be opposed to such manias.

S. I am opposed to nothing, not even a mania, if it is useful. The chase, if properly conducted, is the best instruction for trained riders in correct campaign riding. In place of a real chase we may substitute the paper chase. In both we make, in a certain sense, a distance ride.

But the distance rides show, in addition, how great distances may be traversed by means of a proper distribution of the gaits over a whole day, or several days. The officer learns at the same time how he will have to ride in war to fulfil a certain task. To make preparation for war complete, the distance ride should always be combined with a reconnaissance. In such a task, when the distance is fixed, the proper treatment and care of the horse should be kept in view and its condition considered. The horse should be hardened and prepared before the ride takes place. It will lose some flesh. But the legs should not suffer, nor the appetite, otherwise the demands will be too much for the horse. If the legs or the appetite have suffered, too much has been demanded of the horse, or the gaits have not been divided up properly, or the horse has not been properly cared for. Competitive distance rides should be strictly prohibited. They simply ruin the horses.

H. I still have a question regarding the details of drill.

In my letters on cavalry (14th letter) I have pronounced against the so-called "minor squadron school," to which many squadrons often devote the greater part of the drill day. Friends among professional cavalrymen have advised me that this minor squadron school could not be dispensed with. I was told that unless it were practised, there would be no guarantee that the troop would trot on the march in a manner easy on the horse, and without laming or galling it. What do you think of it?

S. It is absolutely necessary to practise long-continued trot in all formations prescribed by regulations. It is also necessary to be able to come to a halt and again trot off in these formations without the rear rank riding on top of the front rank in halting or chasing after it in starting. During the marching trot of larger units temporary checks will occur which the cavalry must be able to stand without injury. That is what I want practised in winter, when nothing can be done but horse exercise. If the recruits drill with the squadron, it may be practised in going to and returning from the drill ground, once by twos, once by threes, once with a right turn. Nor can the squadron commander, if unable to observe the whole squadron on the road, dispense with this exercise in order to prove the example. The squadron should also be practised in quickly coming into fighting formation from any narrow or deep column.

It is necessary in order to be able to deliver a charge immediately after emerging from a defile.

But the practice of frequent passage from one marching column into the other, where one formation is barely completed before another is commenced, is not only a useless expenditure of horseflesh and time, but lames horses uselessly. To many a cavalryman, in whose youth these tricks were industriously practised and considered as the crown of training, it may seem hard to admit that he has wasted so much precious time and energy.

H. I rejoice over the confirmation of my opinion by the authority of the expert. For I remind you that toward the end of my 14th letter I expressed myself to this effect: "It would be much more important to practise long trots in these long columns with narrow fronts, than the frequent change from one to the other."

S. But I go much farther here than you. I consider the long march with passage of defiles before arriving on the fighting ground, and the taking of the fighting formation, one of the most essential things to be practised by cavalry in bodies larger than the squadron, up to the division. For on account of the present range of fire-arms, the distance of the opposing lines, and the masses of modern armies, the large bodies of cavalry are held far back in battle, before the time for the charge appears to the commander to have arrived.

H. It is for this reason that cavalry must practise the long and sustained gallop.

S. I mean another kind of movement. The long and sustained gallop is taken on the field of action. To this field the cavalry must be brought, and arrive without fatigue, otherwise it will have no strength for this gallop and the charge.

Of what use are general staff journeys, tableaux on the drill ground, training in riding, courage and energy, if the cavalry spends its strength before reaching the enemy?

H. Like that brave horseman at Auerstaedt with his war service decorations, whom Ledebur suspected of cowardice and whose horse was unable to move.

S. It has to be learned. The troop must learn how to ride the sustained trot without overtiring the horses; the leader of large bodies must learn what to look out for when leading the masses to the front.

You see in five great battles I have been with the mass of the cavalry. In each one of them a long advance and the passage of a defile was, or would have been, necessary before taking the drill gallop for action.

In the first place, at Koeniggraetz we (second brigade) were attached to the six regiments and three batteries under Edelsheim which had to pass over the circuitous route from Probus to Techlowitz at a trot.

In the battle of St. Privat the heavy brigade had to hasten its approach from Puxieux to the Bois de Ponty on roads which had been rendered impassable.

In the battle of Beaumont the attempt to turn the French left led the Saxon cavalry division into a similar movement through the forest of Pouilly.

In the battles of Sedan and St. Quentin we stood close to the Chiers and Somme respectively, and would have had to pass a defile in order to take part in the action.

What I saw during these advances convinced me, that much practice is necessary to make one feel confident of coming out with honours in war, when large bodies have to make long advances or pass defiles.

H. It was one of the reasons that caused me to propose in my letters on cavalry that the divisions should make forced marches up to 50 kilometres per day.

S. It is not that alone. They must also learn how to pass over short distances, one or one-and-a-half miles, rapidly and without arriving exhausted, and how to pass rapidly from the marching column to the combat formation. The success and the skill of the leader lie in the skilful, rapid, and yet not unduly fatiguing advance of large bodies of cavalry. In the divisional exercises the chief weight should be laid on this point.

H. I might name you a much-quoted cavalry officer who called the long advance and passage of defiles secondary matters, and relegated their practice to the peace garrisons.

S. I know, but do not at all approve of it. The Prussian cavalry owes its victories at Hohenfriedberg (Striegauer Water) and Zorndorf (Zaberngrund) chiefly to the skill and the experience in passing difficult defiles in large bodies in good order and calmly.

The Hungarian revolution would have been suppressed at once in 1848, had the Imperial cavalry been able to take a timely part at the Schwechat. But it was unable to arrive in time, because the horses broke down at the decisive moment, owing to an unsuitable and too sharp a pace having been taken from the start.

It is not at all a secondary matter, but of prime importance; for what is exhausted cavalry good for on the battlefield? Where and when are the leaders to learn how to bring it up in shape for action if not during the time when the division is united?

H. It is less interesting or pleasant to observe a cavalry division at a marching trot and to ride an hour's short trot oneself, or to halt and wait a long time until the division deploys and advances to the charge, than to watch from one and the same height for some hours rapidly-changing pictures, charges quickly succeeding one another, and ever-changing phases of combat.

S. I admit that! But in the end it is not the purpose of cavalry to amuse spectators. Those bent on amusement should go to the ballet or circus. The object of the cavalry is to prepare itself for war in and through these peace exercises.

To form a division in three lines on known ground and start them

against an enemy advancing discreetly and under instructions from ourselves, requires no special talent on the part of the leader.

H. It is, of course, quite a different matter if the division has to make a long advance, as is almost invariably the case in war.

S. Factors appear here which have great weight.

1. Marching discipline.
2. The pace of the sustained trot.
3. The condition of the horses.
4. The overcoming of obstacles, which is somewhat different in the marching column from what it is on the jumping grounds.
5. The deployment of twenty-four squadrons from the defile. That must be done with order and calmness and is one of the most important problems for cavalry. On it depends the rapidity of deployment into line and the compactness of the charge.

True, much can be done in garrison by way of preparation for the exercises of large bodies.

H. Through long movements in marching columns or squadrons, especially in horse exercise, when the weather limits the activity of horses, as you told me before this.

S. On other occasions also, when sufficient ground is at the disposal of the garrison. But it is five squadrons at the most, not twenty-five or thirty, that are available and are in the same garrison (Berlin and Potsdam excepted). With every additional squadron the difficulty increases, and with a division of six regiments and one or more batteries, it becomes one of the most difficult and important problems. It is the proof of the example, whether the individual training has been rational and whether everything in the troop is going right.

H. Nor is it easy to command.

S. Certainly not! It will not suffice to take the lead and ride ahead, but the division of the paces, the timely intercalation of a walk to let the horses get their wind, etc., will considerably increase the velocity and compactness of the subsequent charge.

Hence the superior cavalry leaders should possess knowledge of the horse and of its capabilities.

H. The manner of arranging the advance and combining it with passage of defiles should afford ample means for judging the ability of the superior leaders, and especially of the division commanders.

S. Certainly! You can judge thereby, whether he has correctly guided and supervised the individual training of the organisations under his command. It will also demonstrate, whether he reads the ground correctly and utilises it, whether he possesses self-control and calmness. If he exhibits excitement or impatience, they will communicate themselves to the whole body and have an injurious effect on the weight of the charge.

For the success of cavalry depends on its timely arrival in good condition. It is only then that the long gallop, the vehement and closed charges, are at all practicable.

The charge should be ridden with dash. Where is that to come from, if the horses have been exhausted in the advance and no longer respond to the spur? That is certainly not encouraging for the rider!

Where is the dash of the leader to come from, if he is in doubt whether he will be able to pass in safety this defile, that marshy ground, etc., and, once beyond, to make at once a compact charge?

H. Such doubts, I suppose, also occurred in the cavalry of Seidlitz. Frequently, perhaps, he took risks and was lucky.

S. No, he was sure of his game. He knew what his troops could do, and knew where he was leading them. For his cavalry did splendid reconnoitring. At Zorndorf he had the Zaberngrund thoroughly reconnoitred and the passages marked with whisps of straw. That is another art which has been lost, the reconnaissance of the ground over which the charge is to pass.

H. It has remained one of the chief features in the army.

S. A principle that is rarely followed out. I don't care to give names, but I might mention many cases during the last wars when great masses of cavalry made miles of circuits in order to pass around a certain obstacle, simply because the reconnaissance of it had been neglected. Fords might have been found immediately in front, and the point where we were being expected with great impatience might have been reached hours earlier.

H. Do you think that many leaders possess the requisite qualifications for leading great masses of cavalry and exercising them to advantage in the manner proposed by you?

S. Nature rarely endows man with this gift. But even a mediocre head may acquire it by practice and routine, provided he is a good horseman and judge of horses.

The practice ground should be correspondingly selected, not a level stretch, easily passable at all points, but broken ground in which men and horses may be prepared for war as much as the leaders are practised in overcoming and utilising the ground.

H. You spoke at different times of a special sort of pace for the sustained trot, and called it, I believe, "dog trot." Is that pace different from the prescribed drill trot of 240 metres per minute?

S. Certainly! It is quite a short pace, which the horses can endure for miles in one breath. It is, so to speak, the natural gait of the mounted horse. Its vulgar name is dog trot or cossack trot. Prince Frederick Charles gave it the name of "travelling-march trot." Call it travelling trot, if you like.

On forced marches horses cannot endure the lively drill trot, because it is too hard on their lungs.

H. Why don't you propose the travelling trot for the drill?

S. Because horses that go none but this trot, would soon be stiff

in the legs, particularly the front legs, while their lungs would remain sound. Hence the travelling trot for travelling, the regulation trot for regulation evolutions. Everything in its place!

I tell you, such exercises of large units possess great practical utility. Mere drill evolutions of the division ought to be regarded secondary in importance to them.

It ought to be laid down as a principle, that the regiments should not emerge from these exercises weakened and broken down, on the contrary, they should be steeled for all eventualities of war. They should form the culmination of the training of man and horse, and of the course of military gymnastics of the horse. The trainer who over-trains, is a poor one. A poor division one, which at the termination of a mere peace exercise by division is too much exhausted to be at once led against the enemy.

H. You seem to be much opposed to the three line tactics, as recommended in the eighth section of the regulations.

S. Not at all. Only as regards formation for fighting, I am a faithful adherent of the system of Frederick the Great, who wanted the first line made as strong as possible—overwhelming. Hence I prefer a formation that places the greater part of the force in the first line, to the formation in three lines of equal strength.

In fighting cavalry the restoration of the fight against a half-way equal opponent cannot be counted upon if the first line is defeated.

The moral impression is also quite different, if the first line is strong and thus, perhaps, enabled to overlap.

The system of reinforcing from the rear is very proper for the infantry combat, but for the cavalry it is too much of an infantry arrangement.

Above all, no hesitation or tricks in the charge! He who risks much, gains much. Hence you should bet with confidence on the first card.

H. You prefer to spend the season of divisional exercises in advances, passage of defiles, deployments, etc. In that case all exercises in three lines, whether of equal or unequal strength, would have to be omitted.

S. That would not prevent from deploying in three lines and making all of them charge against a common enemy, each in accordance with its assigned task.

H. If you spend so much time and horse-power on exercises of advance, you will be unable to outline, not to say practise, each of the cases mentioned in the regulations, during the few days in the year when the cavalry division is together for exercises.

S. Is it at all possible to outline, not to say practise, all the cases of the three line tactics mentioned there? For each line, if I am not mistaken, five tasks are mentioned, which it is to perform. That makes altogether 125 combinations for the three lines. Would you want to practise all of them?

H. Then you criticise the regulations as too prolix?

S. Not at all. The duties and modes of action of the leaders of



the three lines are necessary and excellent. Only we cannot drill all of them. In war it is the business of the leader of each line to recognise from the situation which one of its functions it is to perform. Moreover, it is quite impossible in peace to represent the situation true to nature. Either the divisional commander arranges everything beforehand. In that case, he loses the most essential benefit to be derived from the exercise; that of breaking himself in in combination with his subordinate leaders by drill from the saddle. Or he sends an order to each line specifying a certain situation. In view of the rapidity of the movements, that order will always arrive too late. Or he rides everywhere himself. Of course, in that case, he cannot lead, i.e., not from the place where he ought to be in the presence of the enemy. If, then, he makes, at the most, two charges with the whole division each day after passing defiles or difficult ground, it will be enough.

H. I had imagined you would advise a normal attack formation for the division; against cavalry one of three lines, the second line being in squadron column distributed to both flanks and overlapping, the third line in regimental column in rear of the centre of the first, which is charging in line; against infantry a formation in two lines, the second line overlapping the outer flank. You certainly will not deny that if cavalry is to take a hand in the infantry fight by charging around the flank of its own infantry, two lines will suffice, the second line overlapping the outer flank as stated.

S. Please do not paint the devil on the wall, and save me from normal formations! They become at once soul-killing schemes.

H. It might be stated that circumstances would modify the scheme, and that it should be considered as holding good merely for an ideal "tabula rasa." Did not Frederick the Great make his cavalry charge in the manner explained by me? I borrowed it from him.

S. Yes, he made charges that way sometimes, not always, frequently in a different manner. I am willing to admit that there may be cases in which two lines, or even one line, may suffice, and where each one might be made stronger. But no scheme, if you please! Your scheme for infantry would not even fit the most celebrated charge in the battle of Vionville. Bredow's brigade should have been followed by a second line to engage the cavalry which charged the brigade after it delivered its charge and was in disorder, and by a third line for the purpose of increasing the temporary success to victory.

It is therefore much better to lay down general principles for the action of the three lines, as is done in our regulations, and to demand from the initiative and insight of the leaders to do the right thing in the right place.

Thus it will also become possible to give expression to these principles in the charges occasionally made by whole divisions in peace.

We must renounce the idea of illustrating all possible emergencies, or to prepare for them. Still worse would it be to lay down a scheme

to which everybody would stick. It would kill the spirit that is to animate the cavalry.

H. You believe, then, that so many exercises in three line tactics as are now carried out on the drill grounds by large bodies of cavalry, are not necessary.

S. That is my belief; at any rate, the chief weight should be placed on the compact, vehement charge, and therefore also on the question of how to bring the troops fresh, unfatigued and in good order into the enemy's presence.

It will in no small degree augment the self-confidence of the troops, and the confidence of the leader in the troops.

When the leader knows that the troops will overcome all difficulties of terrain, and that in spite of these difficulties he can bring them up to the enemy in full strength and in close formation, he will undertake some things as matters of course, which otherwise would appear to him as ruinous risks.

The officer who in the course of years of such exercises has risen to the leadership of large bodies, will know what the troops can do, and will be capable of great achievements. For that reason I said on the first day of our conversations, that the manner of training of the cavalry should produce the higher leaders.

H. Do you mean to produce Seidlitzes by the system of training?

S. Seidlitzes, no, nor Zietens nor Blüchers. Geniuses of like kind are born as such and merely perfected by the system of training. Men like Driesen and others, however, are thereby produced, and they, too, have done great things.

H. It is true, if in the divisional exercises the horses are not exhausted by too long a drill in three lines as I have seen it done for five or six hours at a stretch, no period of rest will be necessary.

S. Nor shall we have any more influenza. I again revert to this fact even at the risk of being tiresome.

Our present breed of horses has more blood and is of much better quality than forty years ago.

The highly-bred horse requires a treatment different from that accorded to the common horse. The former military mount, because of lower breed, required less exercise in the open, and could stand fattening. Our present remounts, part of whom are very high caste animals, require much fresh air and exercise in the open. To them the sudden transition from severe work to absolute rest is highly injurious, which rest is frequently prescribed from false notions of how to spare a horse. On the other hand, the sudden change from rest to severe work is equally injurious. Such change should be gradual and made with great care. The better bred animal also requires purer air in the stable than the common animal. If these peculiarities of the nobler horse are disregarded, influenza will continue to demand its victims, especially if the horses are stabled together in large stables.

If abrupt changes between work and rest are avoided, if the horses

are taken out in the open daily in any kind of weather, and put through a smart trot to warm them up and put the blood in circulation, they will remain in good health.

If influenza breaks out in a stable, the veterinarians prescribe much gentle exercise in the open, hence exercise and air are called in to prevent disease.

H. According to your ideas, remounts and recruit horses are relegated to the school in winter, when the ground is impracticable. In their case you will have to give up the prophylactic care of their health.

S. It is too bad that our climate obliges us to do so in the case of these sixty-six horses. All the more reason not to give up the remaining seventy to equally injurious methods. All the more reason to take remounts and recruits out in the open as often and as long as possible. If they are relegated to the school for weeks and months, the transition to sustained work in the open should take place gradually and with great care.

To the men likewise much exercise in the open air is more beneficial than the air in the school; moreover, it hardens them. The demands made on cavalry in the field, especially on its officers, are such that no officer who has become soft, can fulfil them. They can be made equal to these demands only by hardening and habituating them to all kinds of weather in time of peace. In addition, the efficiency of cavalry depends on their riding, and the instruction they give in riding, since the non-commissioned officers get civil positions so early, that they are no longer the supports of the interior service as they were fifty years ago.

The better the officer rides, the better the instruction he gives, the more pleasant and interesting the service will be to him, for good results will not fail to follow.

But if he learns nothing beyond the eternal sameness of a scheme and of a soul-killing cramming for the one day of inspection, he will not acquire passion for the service, he will become blasé and prefer his stylish boudoir to the saddle.

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#### FIFTEENTH CONVERSATION. (MAY 9TH, 1886.)

##### DEVOUT WISHES.

H. After all you have explained to me, I assume that you desire essential changes in our riding instructions, our organisation, and our cavalry drill regulations.

S. No essential changes, I assure you. I have always based my ideas on the riding instructions and the regulations. I think both are very good. A good, sensible rider will get along with both of them. It is the spirit of these precepts, however, that should be kept in view.

H. Have you really no wishes at all in this particular?

S. What reflecting man would not form his own ideas or entertain wishes at variance with facts and conditions!

H. Let us then begin with the riding instructions.

S. I told you once before that I should hail with joy an amplification of the last sentence of the introduction of the riding instructions (Part I., page 12.).

H. How would you have it read?

S. I should propose that it read:—

“The lessons exclusively designed for the third class and likewise the lessons on the double trail in the second part shall, in the rides of the regiments, under no circumstances be taught or inspected by rides, they should be taught and inspected in individual riding.”

H. That sentence belongs in an introduction preceding the whole riding instructions, and not merely in the first part.

S. That is where the whole introduction belongs. This, however, is an objection of mere formal nature. For this introduction has got into the first part because the revision of the several parts came out singly at different times.

H. The regulation proposed by you would require a considerable revision of the text. In the illustrations of inspections the riding of side paces by command would have to be left out for one thing.

S. It might instead be worded in this way:—

“Exhibitions of side paces on the double trail, and paces with shortened tempo in individual riding.”

I should like best to have the illustrations of how to present a ride at inspection, omitted altogether, because it has been the experience that these illustrations lead to schemes injurious to the nature of the art of riding.

H. In other places the text would also have to be changed and likewise everything in the second part of the riding instructions that refers to side paces on the double trail, and gaits with shortened tempo, by rides.

S. It would have to be emphasised that the training of the remount should above all be individual training, and that the combination into rides with distances should not take place too soon.

H. The same should be prescribed in the first part for the training of recruits.

S. It should at least be brought about that when the individual recruits are able to ride around by themselves, individual training still is and remains the chief consideration. The regulations for the seat are excellent. It should be more emphasised though that no instruction in handling the reins be given until the seat is secure, firm, and independent of the reins.

H. It would be a great saving of material, if in all exercises and lessons too rapid a progress at the expense of thoroughness were cautioned against in the manner explained by you.

S. That is done now on every page of the text of our present riding instructions, I might almost say between every two lines, and sufficiently

so for anyone who will read it. For instance, the instructions call attention to the fact that there are horses which on account of their conformation are not able to go the paces on the double trail as prescribed. It would not be superfluous, however, to prescribe expressly that lessons on the double trail be practised by such men and horses alone whose efficiency, training, and development preclude injurious consequences for the horse.

At the point where the instructions deal with the distance between the trails in these lessons, it should be enjoined that this most perfect lesson should be attempted with normally built, completely bent, and fully developed horses alone, that in the absence of these prerequisites a smaller distance between the trails, down to the second position pure and simple, should suffice. It should be emphasised at the same time that these lessons are merely gymnastics, means to an end, and are to cease as soon as the end has been attained.

H. I suppose you have similar wishes regarding the shortened paces in trot and gallop?

S. Wherein, however, the shortening and increasing of the pace are not to be mistaken for the shortened tempo, since the shortening and increasing should form one of the principal means of training.

H. I am sure you wish to have the division into periods at the beginning of the second part omitted.

S. It has simply led to a precipitation in the training of the remounts, and a misunderstanding of the meaning of the instructions. If the division into periods can be dispensed with in the training of the recruits (first part), it can certainly be dispensed with in that of the remounts. The riding instructions should, instead, admonish never to neglect the thoroughness of training in favour of rapidity.

For this reason it should be specifically prescribed that no horse from among the old remounts should be permanently placed in ranks before it is fully developed and under the rider's control. For close drill the old remount should, if possible, be turned out on such days only when the squadron commander can give it special consideration in his exercises.

It would not be superfluous to call attention to the fact that in case war should break out, the old remount would be more fit for war service, than if it were exhausted, spoiled, and injured in its sinews by premature participation in close drill.

H. You concur in the present division into two riding classes, where, with some admissible exceptions, all men with more than one year of service belong to the second class on general principles?

S. I should not oppose this regulation if allowance were made for the wishes I have expressed and if the training were handled in the manner I have explained to you.

H. Lastly, I suppose you would like to have incorporated in the regulations some rule fixing the number of trainers?

S. The present instructions are so full and plain on the selection

of the remount riders, that nothing better could be said on the subject. If the superintending superiors insist on compliance with these regulations, those things which I particularly desire will be done. The instructions cannot very well contain an order that they shall be obeyed. The regulations are there for that purpose. The riding instructions should avoid naming the number of trainers. We both assumed twenty-six. If, however, that number were to appear in the regulations, that number of trainers would be taken whether the men were suitable or not. That is to be avoided. For I told you before, it is better for the squadron to have fewer trainers, all of them efficient, than to have more, and among them men of doubtful efficiency.

In general, I repeat what I have always said, we can get along very well with the present instructions. It is only to be wished that alterations be made in the text, where experience has proved that, contrary to the intentions of the authors, it has led to misunderstandings, precipitation, and perfunctoriness.

The chief consideration is the handling of the instructions, which means the handling of the service.

H. In that respect you have fully expressed yourself. Would you make more precise rules on this subject?

S. I think it could be done in a very brief way.

I would—this is outside the riding instructions and would have to be incorporated in them—give the order forbidding all final riding inspections, and direct the regimental commander to convince himself by personal—always unexpected—presence with the several rides under instruction, whether that instruction is given correctly in the several squadrons of the regiment.

The brigade commander should at the same time be held responsible, that the personality of the regimental commander find expression in his regiment. For this reason he is made responsible in all arms for the individual training. We cannot attack that system.

Nor is it necessary. The brigade commander can take notice of the details of the service in the regiments, and give his advice. Moreover, under existing regulations, it is his duty to report to his superiors, whenever the details of the service in a certain regiment are not handled according to correct principles.

H. Would he not be interfering with the service by watching its details so systematically?

S. It would have to be laid down that he is to do so in the proper manner. He has two or three regiments, or ten to fifteen squadrons altogether. If in the course of the winter service, say between November 1st and April 1st, he witnesses the training in each squadron once, as the regimental commander witnesses the details of the riding service, and if we allow two days to each squadron, it will make twenty or thirty days distributed over these five months. The brigade commander can then so divide the time for each squadron, that he will see



it one year at the beginning, in the next toward the end of the training in riding, etc., and thus get an idea of the whole service.

Squadrons which he knows are going about it in the right way, he need not see at all or inspect their riding in winter, if he be short of time.

H. Would you also do away with the fixed inspections during summer?

S. No! I would confine myself to this, as it is now being done, that the regimental commander inspects the troop and ride, the brigade commander the squadron.

H. In these inspections mere drill would not be sufficient. We frequently see three-quarters of an hour or an hour devoted to a squadron. In that period you can see nothing but crammed exhibitions. Not only the drill, but every detail of riding ought to be made the subject of inspection. More time should particularly be devoted to individual riding and to the movements in dispersed order.

The rides I want to remain in existence throughout the summer. The brigade commander will have the ride instructors show him the individual riding. I have no objection if now and then he makes the proof of the example and requires riding in squads with distances. Only it should not be the sole measure applied in judging the riding.

In this manner the brigade commander could hardly inspect more than one squadron each day.

S. If he gets through in one day. But what harm is there in that?

H. It might, under circumstances, render it impossible for him to inspect all the squadrons before regimental drill is taken up, especially if the latter is to take place as early as June.

S. I don't think so. If he devotes two days to each squadron, he can inspect all ten or fifteen squadrons in twenty or thirty days, little more than three or five weeks.

H. But he cannot begin his inspection on the day on which the last recruits have been placed in ranks.

S. Why not? Only he should apply the proper measure of criticism to the squadron; it would at the same time best supplement his knowledge of the course of instruction followed in the squadron. You forget, however, that according to my ideas the squadron would have been drilled the whole year round, winter and summer. If at the time of the brigade commander's inspection some recruits cannot drill with the squadron without "upsetting" it, they should be presented to the brigade commander as recruits, excluded from the squadron drill, and inspected in individual riding.

It is not necessary, however, that every squadron be inspected by the brigade commander and marked with the stamp of "done," before the regimental drill begins. The brigade commander can very well inspect some squadrons in detail later on in July. For the individual riding is to be continued even then.

H. How do you imagine to yourself the influence of the divisional

commander on the riding service, if according to your ideas it is to be highly beneficial?

S. In that direction I cannot separate my wishes from those which I entertain as to the organisation of the cavalry.

H. I understand. You want standing cavalry divisions in peace, as was the devout wish of our friend, Kaehler, whose death was so untimely, in order to facilitate the transition from the peace to the war status at the moment of mobilisation.

S. Not quite. I desire the division of the cavalry into cavalry inspections, as laid down by Frederick the Great. There should be as many cavalry inspections in peace as there would be divisions in war. All he would have to do in case of mobilisation, would be to detach those regiments which are to form divisional cavalry; in war he would thus keep regiments and brigades which he knows from long acquaintance. Neither the regiments nor the inspector need know which of the light regiments are designated each year for divisional cavalry. The detail may be changed regularly as with the squadrons designated as *dépôt* squadrons. Any difference of training of the cavalry division and divisional cavalry would thus be prevented.

H. What do the estimates say to that?

S. Not much! We have now in peace four standing cavalry divisions which might be made into inspections by attaching to them several more regiments for inspection purposes. If you take the register and compare the number of cavalry regiments with that of the mixed divisions of the German Army, each of which requires one cavalry regiment, you will find that fifty-four regiments remain, from which nine divisions may be formed in war. Thus we might have nine inspections in peace time, each of eight or twelve regiments. That would necessitate the formation of five new inspection staffs.

H. What would be the functions and duties of the cavalry inspector in peace? Would you separate the cavalry entirely from the corps?

S. No. That may remain as it is, and need not be changed. The duties of the inspector would be to inspect the different bodies of cavalry, and to exercise the united division each year.

H. The organisations which he would inspect, analogous to the inspection of the squadrons by the brigade commander, would be the united regiment and the united brigade. Could an inspector inspect every year eight or twelve regiments during the period of regimental drill? Does that drill last long enough to make it practicable?

S. It can be done. Many regiments will probably have a common drill ground with the other regiments of the brigade; there two regiments can be inspected in one day. At any rate, the regiments which have but one garrison should have the same drill season, should drill throughout the year, winter and summer, sometimes in the school of the regiment as I stated for the squadron, only not quite as often. Perhaps once in two or three weeks. They will then remain in practice summer and winter and could be inspected any day.

That would have the additional advantage that the regimental drill season would not be looked upon as something extraordinary, a kind of international festivity, and that the training would be carried out more thoroughly. The inspector may also begin the regimental inspections at the beginning of the drill season, as the brigade commander begins the squadron inspections, if he simply adapts his inspections to the circumstances, modifies his demands, and varies the order of inspection each year.

H. If despite the adoption of inspections the connection with the corps is not to be severed, the influence of the inspector over his troops will cease as soon as the regiments are no longer united for common exercise. On the other hand, the influence of the officer commanding the army corps on the military training of his cavalry would be paralysed, if the inspector were to give the instructions.

S. The inspector should also have the right and duty to inspect at any time during the year, and at times other than that when the squadrons are united for the larger exercises. There he should go into the smallest details, since he cannot inspect the individual riding while the regiments are united.

Even though twelve full regiments were placed under a single inspector, he could, on an average, inspect one squadron every month in detail conformably to the season and the degree of training attained. Hence he can inspect every year one squadron of each regiment and that would suffice to point out the direction in which his inferiors would have to work.

H. This I suppose is now the custom everywhere, where cavalry divisions are formed.

S. It is probably the last remnant from the time when generals were at the same time the chiefs of one squadron each, which they not only inspected, but drilled, as did Seidlitz at Ohlau.

I cannot share your idea that the influence of the commanding general on the military training of the cavalry of his corps would be paralysed. He has the period of exercises for mixed arms and the whole time during peace when the inspector is absent, to influence his own cavalry. It should not be difficult so to circumscribe the relations of these two officers in the cavalry as is now done in the artillery. For instance, the commanding general might have the privilege of being present at the inspector's inspections. Brigade commanders and inspectors would be required to send him duplicates of all reports, etc.

H. It would still leave a closer connection with the corps than is at present the case with the artillery.

S. I would not like to estrange the cavalry from all co-operation with the other arms, as it regulates the employment of cavalry and preserves it from one-sidedness.

H. I suppose you will want a common superior over the nine inspectors. Otherwise there is danger that the work may be done on

different lines in every inspection. You are probably in favour of an inspector-general of cavalry.

S. If there is a proper person for the place, his function might be very beneficial. We had one until a short time ago. He was suddenly taken away by death. I do not care to assert the necessity of an inspector-general of cavalry, for the qualifications he should possess are so many, that it would be hard to find the right man. Here then the organisation becomes dependent on the man's personality. In the end it will always be the supreme war lord who will have to decide what requirements cavalry is to be enabled to fulfil by its individual training, and he will thus remain the real inspector-general of cavalry.

H. You could not expect the supreme war lord to be a cavalryman and professional rider, for you said yourself that even a professional rider never learns everything, while the monarch has to devote his time to matters quite different from the art of riding.

S. I told you once before, I believe in one of our first conversations, that it is not at all necessary for the monarch to be a good rider. Frederick the Great never had the reputation of being a specially fine rider. But he knew what to demand from his cavalry and fixed the results his cavalry had to accomplish. Any monarch with military understanding can do that for all arms. Our monarchs are all military experts and grow up in the army. They know what the several arms need and fix the task for each, though they may not have been brought up in that particular arm.

H. You may be right. Did not in days gone by our imperial master recognise as correct, and order, the great change in artillery, the adoption of rifled guns, notwithstanding the protest of the inspector-general of artillery?

Such a superior would not be able to prevent the details of training from being carried on under very different systems in the several inspections, for the simple reason that he would hesitate to interfere in details which are not familiar to him.

S. The riding schools must bring about the uniformity of details.

H. Does not our riding institution at Hanover accomplish that? It is in a very good way.

S. The present riding institution cannot do it, because its purposes are too extended and manifold.

H. I have heard very serious objections and had occasion to make them myself. The most important matters, however, are said to be greatly improved.

S. Yet the institution is not equal to the demand. In the first place, it is too large to train every individual thoroughly. On the other hand, it is too small to furnish the requisite number of riding instructors for the entire German cavalry.

The pupils there learn how to ride school, sport, and the races. That is all very well. But they do not sufficiently learn how to instruct in riding and break young and particularly raw horses. Hence the com-

plaint, that the graduate of the Hanover school "kniebels" the horses. Hence the frequent remark that he must forget everything he learned at Hanover before he is of any service in the troop.

H. You are criticising the present system of the riding school. Why does not the pupil learn there what he needs in the troop?

S. The criticism does not fall on the system, but on the fact that a single institution cannot do all that at once. These are things that cannot be learned all at once, they must be learned one after the other.

H. The riding institution is even now so large that its direction by one man is too difficult. An increase of the time of instruction would extend it still more, unless the number of graduates annually transferred to the cavalry were decreased. That is likewise impracticable, because even now a greater number of graduates is desirable.

What remedy do you propose?

S. In justification of my ideas let me, in the first place, call your attention to the decline of the high school proper.

H. What do you want with the high school? You have yourself declared the paces of the high school to be unsuited for campaign riding.

S. Certainly! Nevertheless, the high school is, and always will be, the basis of any kind of riding, i.e., of mastering the horse.

The high school carries the art of mastering the horse to the highest pitch as its ultimate object. The horseman who breaks a well-built horse into a school horse, has brought the art to the highest perfection in himself.

The way by which he has reached his goal is the only correct one.

That way must also be pursued in military riding. The only difference is that military riding does not carry the art so far, and considers it merely as a means to an end, i.e., that of training efficient mounted combatants.

Campaign riding therefore discontinues the high school earlier, and with each horse at a different stage; in the case of one horse it dispenses with all side paces on the double trail on account of its bodily conformation, in another case it rests content with one-sixteenth side pace, in another case it advances as far as the complete, shortened tempo and renvers, etc.

But in the case of not a single campaign horse does it go beyond the side paces on the double trail, and the shortened tempo. Fancy steps and similar things are omitted altogether.

But the road on which the high school starts is the same for all horses, is therefore the basis of any and all riding.

Unless you adhere to this basis, you lose the firm ground on which instruction in riding must stand, the basis for the system of horse-training. Ignorance of the school causes confusion and vagueness of terms. The neglect of the school has opened the door to heresies through which injurious theories, partly from the race course, partly from the circus, have crept into the healthy riding of the olden times.

The high school should not be suffered to die out. It is even now

in danger of disappearing. Excepting the Spanish school at Vienna and a few horses at Hanover, it no longer exists.

That should not be. The Central Riding Institution at Hanover ought to cultivate it more. All pupils of the institution ought to learn it. The number of school horses should be increased. A school hall ought to be established.

The officers ordered there ought to learn how to break from the raw state horses such as the cavalry receives in its annual contingents of remounts, and to train each horse so far for riding, proportionate to its individual capacity, that it can be placed in ranks.

Smart riding in the field, in hunt and chase should not be neglected, but should be carried on there as it is now.

Lastly the pupils should be taught how to give instruction in riding, and how to train pupils of the first as well as of the second riding class.

H. How much time do you think will one of these pupils require?

S. Three or four years at least.

H. The institution would assume enormous dimensions if it were to cover each year the demand for good riding instructors in the regiments.

S. That is not necessary. It need only train the instructors which are to give instruction at the headquarters of each cavalry inspection.

H. That would make nine branch riding institutions.

S. Like the Saxon riding institution at Dresden.

H. What do the estimates say to that?

S. Nothing at all! The instructors alone would form a separate item. The costs would in other particulars be covered by the savings made from a smaller extension of the Central Riding Institution. The pupils would be carried on the pay rolls of their regiments.

H. What would be the aim of the branch institutions?

S. To train all cavalry officers of the inspection to saddle-firm riders and efficient instructors of the first riding class. Hence every officer should be required to pass through a one-year course at the branch institution, just as he has passed through a one-year course at the war school before he did duty with troops as an officer.

Some of the older officers of the regiment would, later on, have to take a second course at the branch institution to be trained as instructors of the squads of horse trainers of the second class.

H. This organisation would deprive the chief of the Central Riding Institution of most of his influence and place the centre of gravity of practical training in riding into the branch riding institutions.

S. On the contrary! I mean to enlarge the sphere of the chief of the Central Riding Institution by placing the branches under him the same way as the war schools are placed under the inspector-general of military education and training.

He would have to inspect the branches, regulate the course of training, and designate the instructors for the branches from among those which he has trained at the Central Riding Institution.



As regards daily disciplinary and judicial matters, they would have to be left under the authority of the local cavalry inspector.

H. How many pupils do you think should be at one of these branches?

S. In the first place all the junior officers of each regiment who have not been there before, i.e., one or two per regiment, and of the older lieutenants as many as required, perhaps one per regiment or brigade. For an inspection of ten or twelve regiments that would make, at the most, twenty to twenty-four young, and ten to twelve older lieutenants.

H. And at the Central Riding Institution at Hanover?

S. It would suffice if it produced annually one instructor for each branch. With a four years' course there would be four contingents of ten pupils each, in all, forty pupils.

H. Thus 200 or 300 officers would be withdrawn from the service for purposes of instruction.

S. Is that not the case now?

H. At present each regiment has but one officer at Hanover, that makes about 100 in all.

S. And all the regiments, including those garrisoned in more than one garrison, have to assemble their junior officers at regimental headquarters for instruction in riding.

H. Would you suspend the regimental instruction of officers in riding completely?

S. Certainly not! All lieutenants at regimental headquarters should, in addition, receive daily instruction in riding. But it would no longer be necessary to order officers from outlying garrisons to regimental headquarters for the sole purpose of instruction in riding.

It would not be injurious to practical service if the junior officers were first ordered to the branch riding institution to undergo instruction in riding.

What are junior officers good for in practical winter service, if they can neither ride nor instruct in riding? They would simply do mischief by their errors. They must first be taught. You might just as well say that the ensign is withdrawn from practical service by being ordered to the war school.

Is not the young artillery officer ordered for one year, and the brightest among them for two years, to the artillery school to complete their education? And does the artillery complain that forces are thereby withdrawn from practical service?

H. After mature reflection I cannot but agree with you. For the entire practical service during peace is but a continuous huge school, in which the entire nation in arms is trained for war.

Tell me your further wishes in so far as they concern the regulations.

S. The regulations are the soldier's gospel and it is not well to attack them, even if it be merely to express wishes.

H. I think it quite possible to entertain the highest respect for

the regulations, and, at the same time, wishes as to how they might be framed differently, and as to what other precepts they might contain. Imagine you were a member of a commission to revise the regulations, what would you propose?

S. Very few things indeed. Quite recently a few highly welcome and simplifying decisions have been rendered, and that being the case, I would have to make but few propositions.

H. What propositions would they be?

S. I should propose, in the first place, that more stress be laid on the control of the troop in dispersed order, and that it be stated expressly that that troop alone is capable of delivering a closed charge which, though in dispersed order, remains capable of direction, the men of the troop following their officers and the latter implicitly obeying the signals. In accordance therewith it should be made the chief consideration that the troop be skilled in assuming the close order from dispersed order, on signal or command, at any time, and in any formation.

That would require paragraph 59 to be made more explicit. For it is my opinion, as is evident from all I have so often and explicitly stated, that the passing from individual training to the movements in dispersed order and from the latter to close order, should be made the basis of the course of training, and that the regulations lay more stress on this point than paragraph 59 does at present.

H. Properly speaking, regulations merely lay down the finished forms in which the troops are to move, but not the course of training.

S. Properly! But you are aware that the authors of the regulations have long since recognised that it is impossible to ignore the course of training altogether. I would propose, for the gallop, not to begin merely with open files and greater distance of the second rank, but to take previously thereto the swarm formation as a transition from the individual riding to riding in aligned open ranks, i.e., that seeming disorder of a troop of horsemen, in which they move in dispersed order, in conformity to what I explained the last time. For if you pass at once from individual riding to riding with open ranks and files, the men are too easily tempted to use rude aids in order to keep the direction, and to injure the horses. But when the gait of the drill gallop has been once established in the more simple swarm formation, and when man and horse have become accustomed to stand this more rapid motion without excitement, it will be less difficult to keep the direction without awkward aids.

H. You do not desire any alterations of the forms laid down in the regulations?

S. I am a great advocate of dressing on the centre and would like to have it adopted under all circumstances.

H. I too have hailed the dressing on the centre with joy and I think it is observed everywhere. You would not introduce dressing on the centre for the parade march?

S. That would be inconceivable and impracticable. But I should

like to see it in the charge, not only of a single squadron, but of larger bodies up to the size of a brigade.

H. It is the charge for which it has been introduced.

S. Only for the squadron. And that is what endangers the compactness of the charge of larger bodies.

Each squadron leader leads his squadron. The least deviation from the original direction taken at the start will decrease the interval of the squadron from its neighbour on one and increase that on the other flank, thus causing wide gaps.

H. The regulations cannot undertake to deal with errors that may be committed.

S. Yes, they can, if the errors are so obvious. Supposing, however, that such errors in the original direction are not made, the compactness of the charge would still remain a matter of doubt the moment we begin to suffer losses during the advance.

It is hardly to be expected that in future war cavalry charges will take place where the hostile fire will not claim its victims before actual collision takes place. Even in the charge against cavalry the horse batteries will have their say. Now suppose the shells fall particularly thick in some squadron of a line of the strength of a brigade. That squadron melts down to the size of a troop. Gaps are at once formed between it and the neighbouring squadrons. There can no longer be a question of compactness of the whole mass. It is well known that in cavalry charges Frederick the Great laid the greatest stress on the "mursaille" of the entire charging line.

H. What regulations would you propose?

S. I would let all regulations regarding the dressing stand as they are now, but at the moment when the leader gives the command "Charge," the dressing of the entire charging line, if under one command, even a whole brigade, should be taken toward the centre.

For instance, if the first line consists of two squadrons, the right squadron would command "eyes left," the left squadron "eyes right." In the case of three squadrons the centre squadron would caution "straight to the front," the right flank squadron "eyes left," the left "eyes right," and so on, up to the strength of two regiments.

H. Are the men on the flanks of the first line, or the troop leaders, to act as guides?

S. The troop leaders, of course, for according to paragraph 69 the command "eyes right" ("left") refers to troop leaders alone.

H. In case of an even number of squadrons it would have to be decided which troop leader would be the guide, the left flank troop leader of the right, or the right flank troop leader of the left wing.

S. These details could be specially arranged, how, is immaterial.

H. It may be objected that under circumstances the guide of the squadron of direction might be another man than the one the squadron is accustomed to.

S. According to the regulations the squadron should be accustomed

to all troop guides acting as squadron guides, for it should be able to charge no matter what the inversion of the troops may be, and the third troop from the right is always that of direction.

H. I think it would be simpler if no thought had to be given under any circumstances to the person of the squadron guide. I would propose therefore, that with an even number of squadrons the guide of the troop of direction of the left flank squadron of the right wing, with an uneven number of squadrons the guide of the troop of direction of the centre squadron, be the guide; and that the squadron of direction, determined in this way, should always command "straight to the front," the others "eyes right" or "left," respectively.

S. The difference would be small, and it would matter little whether mine or your plan were adopted.

H. From what you told me the last time of three line tactics, I think you would like to have the regulations changed so as not to make the three lines of equal strength. I think you will propose to form a division of three brigades of two regiments each, so that the first line would have the strength of two brigades, the second and third lines of one regiment each.

S. You are quite mistaken.

H. But you want the first line as strong as possible.

S. Yes! But, still better, I want a main line as strong as possible. It might very easily happen that the first line has to get out of the enemy's way and that the second line makes the first charge.

H. Or that the first line advances against the enemy's flank, while the second charges in front. I believe I told you that I have seen this movement repeatedly employed in the manoeuvres as a ruse, and that the opponent was almost invariably deceived, especially when there was much dust. He would throw himself on the first line, which wheeled into column of troops and galloped off to a flank and which he hoped to strike in flank during the movement. That line, however, had raised such clouds of dust as to conceal the second line which kept straight to the front. The first line, wheeling into line, together with the second line which kept straight ahead, now enclosed the charging opponent in such a manner, that the result of the conflict could not have been doubtful.

S. That may be. Generally one should not indulge in illusions as to the value of such flank movements in the face of the enemy. Clausewitz says of them, that they always presuppose a very stupid opponent. In his cavalry charges Frederick the Great sent nothing against the enemy's flank. He reached the flank by overlapping. For that reason he wanted the first line as strong as possible.

H. After my experiences in war I am inclined not to undervalue manoeuvres in the face of the enemy. In the moment of excitement due to the expectation of battle, the clumsiest ruse will most always succeed. If there is enough humour left in you to contrive a ruse, a manoeuvre with an object, this fact in itself will constitute a superiority over an enemy devoid of such humour, particularly if he is "hot" and pugnacious. It

is only necessary to hold your troops well in hand and to be sure of them. I remind you, how Blücher's simulated retreat with his hussar regiment during the Rhine campaign deceived the enemy; suddenly he had the "front" sounded and charged. I remind you of Hymmen's divergent retreat with the two halves of his squadron, which upon signal faced to the front and took two entire squadrons in flank and defeated them.

S. These are certainly very nice tricks, but also infrequent ones.

H. What would you prescribe?

S. The situations in which we may find ourselves are so different, that it is not wise to take certain figures as "normal," not even as the rule, for long peace service is bound to make every rule into an inviolable "normal" from which no deviation is permitted, into a scheme, and the scheme is the enemy of independence. Paragraph 204 of the regulations says: "The cavalry division is, as a rule, formed in three lines of equal strength."

I consider the words "of equal strength" superfluous and in need of revision.

There may be circumstances when a brigade in the first line would be too much. Why should I, for instance, expend a brigade in the charge, when the enemy shows at first only two squadrons?

There may be cases, when it is not in our power to designate the strength of the first line, as in the "rencontre." The advance guard is perhaps composed of a light regiment which observes the enemy and, screening the front, eludes the enemy's charge until the whole division is deployed. In this case the first line is composed of one regiment, and I should probably put two or three in second line. That would be a case where the first line, giving way to a flank, would afterward form line and take the enemy in flank.

In brief, the combinations which may take place are so many and manifold, that it would be found in each case that the "rule" should be altered, or expressed differently, and that every real case would be an exception to the rule.

H. I am quite curious to know what you would propose.\*

S. I would let everything contained in the regulations on the employment of the several lines, their movements, their objects, stand as it is. The sentence, however, which I have just cited, I would frame as follows: "The cavalry division is, as a rule, formed in three lines: the first, second, and third line."

"The strength of the lines depends on circumstances. It should be endeavoured to make that line which is to deliver the principal blow, as strong as possible, or, at any rate, strong enough to overlap the enemy and take him in flank."

H. That would leave more freedom to the leader of a division.

S. At the same time it would ever remain obligatory upon the leaders of the several lines in war, to throw their lines in the fight in accordance with the excellent precepts of the regulations on the employment of the several lines.

H. Have you no other wishes regarding the regulations?

S. None, except that I would wish that they become part and parcel, so to speak, of every officer, although I believe that several useful simplifications might be made to advantage.

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H. We have in the course of our conversations wandered over the entire field of cavalry, I believe.

S. Not so much "wandered"; say rather "lightly touched upon." For if we were to wander all over it, we would have to delay longer at each place. That would probably be too tedious to you who are not devoted to this arm alone.

H. I have at least formed an approximate idea of what you think of the capabilities of cavalry, what demands you make on the course of training, the leading, etc., on the whole work in peace time, in order so to perfect the cavalry that it may be equal in war to the altered and increased demands due to the latest fire-arms, and I am very grateful to you for it.

You base your ideas on the ground of existing regulations. You make demands due to the latest fire-arms, and I am very grateful to you for it. Old practitioners would condemn you as an innovator.

S. I think so too, though I brought forward nothing but what is old, and want to have nothing to do with subsequent innovations. It is now 100 years since the Great King departed this life. From that moment his principles began to fall into oblivion. Much has been talked about them at all times, but it was frequently found too inconvenient to carry them out. To work in this manner requires unspeakable, unceasing labour. All those fond of personal comfort will declare my ideas impracticable. But, believe me, there are many who think and feel as I do, and act accordingly in their own spheres.

H. Do you really believe that it would be practicable, your system?

S. I beg your pardon, I have invented no special system. I have, as stated, adopted the principles of Frederick the Great and Seidlitz as my rule.

H. Well, I will express myself in this way: do you really believe, that it would be practicable to train the entire cavalry of our army on the principles explained by you? Don't you think that the number of opponents will be too great to allow your idea to prevail? And if it prevailed, how many years would pass by before the entire cavalry were trained throughout on these lines?

S. These questions are hard to answer.

Habit and ease will cling to what has become custom since the Great King's decease. Whether it will be possible to overcome them, who can tell?

How long will it be before the entire cavalry is again trained exclusively on the principles of the Great King?

Well, until all horses of the present school are condemned, i.e., ten years; the requisite instructors must be trained, let us allow an additional ten years, and in order to gain our end all opponents must be won over.



How long that will take depends on the authorities who endeavour to carry it out, and the more or less determined stand they take. The cavalry will improve constantly and gradually. Frederick the Great was quite dissatisfied with his cavalry at Mollwitz. Four years later it shone brightly at Hohenfriedberg, and sixteen years later it reached the zenith of its glory at Rossbach and Leuthen.

We both shall probably not live to reap the full harvest. But what matters that? Does the forester when sowing seed, ask whether he will some day cut and sell the 100-year old tree?

Do we charge only when we are sure of victory? Should we abstain from assailing false notions on the training and instructions of cavalry, because we do not know whether or not our opinion will prevail?

Where in the world have prejudices not existed? Whoever attacked them did not prevail over them at once. In most cases it means hard conflicts of opinion, as hard as those of battle.

It will, however, not prevent those fond of their arm from working each in his own sphere, that what is right and correct may prevail.

Let everyone do his duty in peace, not alone the duties of the service. These duties our zealous officers perform most conscientiously. I mean the duty of reflection on one's arm, and of doing away with pernicious traditions. Then the arm will perform deeds as glorious as were those under Frederick the Great and Seidlitz. It can do it, it will do it, notwithstanding the long range of arms of precision. Let the way to the goal be shown. Officers as brave as ours will do anything that may be asked, if they are only shown how.



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